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TEST BOKLET SERIES

Only IAS

A

Test Booklet
Preliminary Exam- 2019
Only Current Affairs: Test-4

Time Allowed: Two Hours ***Maximum Marks: 200***

INSTRUCTION

1. IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE EXAMINATION YOU SHOULD CHECK THAT THIS TEST BOOKLET ***DOES NOT*** HAVE ANY UNPRINTED OR TORN OR MISSING PAGES FOR ITEMS, ETC. IF SO, GET IT REPLACED BY A COMPLETE TEST BOOKLET.

2. ENCODE CLEARLY THE TEST BOOKLET SERIES A, B, C OR D AS THE CASE MAY BE IN THE APPROPRIATEPLACE IN THE ANSWER SHEET.

3. You have to enter your Roll Number on the Test Booklet in the Box provided alongside. ***DO NOT*** writes anything else on the Test Booklet.

4. This Test Booklet contains 100 items (questions). You will select the response which you want to mark on the Answer Sheet. In case, you feel that there is more than one response, mark the response which you consider the best. In any case, choose ***ONLY ONE*** response for each item,

5. You have to mark all your responses ***ONLY*** on the separate Answer Sheet provided. See direction in the Answer Sheet.

6. All items carry equal marks.

7. Before you proceed to mark in the Answer Sheet the response to various items in the Test Booklet, you have to fill in some particulars in the Answer Sheet as per instruction sent to you with your Admission Certificate.

8. After you have completed filling in all responses on the Answer Sheet and the examination has concluded, you should hand over to the Invigilator ***only the Answer Sheet.*** You are permitted to take away with you the Test Booklet.

9. Sheets for rough work are appended in the Test Booklet at the end.

10. **PENALTY FOR WRONGANSWER:**

(i) There are four alternatives for the answer to every question. For each question which has a penalty for which a wrong answer has been given by candidate, ***one-third*** of the marks assigned to that questions will be deducted as penalty.

(ii) If a candidate gives more than one answer; it will be treated as a wrong answer even if one of the given answer happens to be correct and there will be same penalty as above to that question,

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1. Which of the following methods of voting is being used in Indian elections?

1. Voting by physically present individual.

2. Proxy Voting

3. Voting by Post

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only **(b) 2 and 3 only**

(c) 1 and 3 only **(d) all of the above**

2. India Recently signed long-pending Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA). Consider the following Concerns with reference to COMCASA Agreement:

1. This agreement may harm India's strategic autonomy by making its own communication network vulnerable to US spying.

2. US will retain control over its equipment sold to India under this pact and may manipulate decision-making.

3. It allows sharing of classified information to some of the leading Private entities that makes that information insecure.

Which of the above Concerns is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only **(b) 2 and 3 only**

(c) 3 only **(d) All of the above**

3. Recently, the 4th summit of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) was held in:

(a) Bangladesh

(b) India

(c) Myanmar

(d) Nepal

4. Consider the following statements about Varieties of Democracy Report:

1. It is backed by the United Nations.
2. As per this report, quality of democracy has declined over the past ten years in India.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

5. Consider the following statements with reference to Indian Ocean Conference:

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1. Recently, the third edition of Indian Ocean Conference held in Vietnam.
2. It has been initiated by Delhi based think tank India Foundation.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

6. Consider the following statements with reference to Idukki dam that was recently in news:

1. Idukki dam in Kerala is constructed across the Periyar River, the longest river in Kerala.
2. It was commissioned in the year 1973 with financial aid from former USSR.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

7. Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (CRIF) recently seen in News come under the domain of?

(a) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways

(b) Finance Ministry

(c) Ministry of Tourism

(d) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

8. Consider the following statements about Additional Surveillance Measures:

1. Recently, Additional Surveillance Measures was introduced by RBI.
2. It is intended to surveillance the lending activities of all the banks with high Non-performing assets.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

9. Consumer Price Index for Industrial workers (CPI –IW) is prepared by:

(a) Niti Aayog

(b) Office of Economic advisor, DIPP, Ministry of Commerce and Industry

(c) Central Statistical Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

(d) Labour Bureau, Ministry of Labour & Employment

10. Recently, Which of the following countries jointly signed Caspian Sea Breakthrough Treaty?

1. Azerbaijan
2. Iran
3. Kazakhstan
4. Russia
5. Uzbekistan
6. Turkmenistan

Choose the correct code?

(a) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 **(b) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6**

(c) 2, 3 and 4 **(d) All of the above**

11. The term 'M-STrIPES' is sometimes seen in the news in the context of:

(a) Captive breeding of Wild Fauna

(b) Maintenance of Tiger Reserves

(c) Indigenous Satellite Navigation System

(d) Security of National Highways

12. Consider the following statements with reference to recently held, Nepal-India Think Tank Summit:

1. It was the first ever Think Tank summit between India and Nepal.
2. The summit is proposed to become an annual feature for the participating organizations and it will be hosted alternatively in Nepal and India.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

13. Recently, India has been elected as the President of the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD), Consider the following statement with reference to AIBD:

1. India got the presidency of the organization for the first time.
2. It was established under the auspices of UNESCO.
3. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are founding organisations of the Institute.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only **(b) 2 and 3 only**

(c) 3 only **(d) all of the above**

14. Consider the following statement about Concession Financing Scheme:

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1. Recently, government extended the Concessional Financing Scheme (CFS) for two years till 2020.

2. Under the scheme Ministry of Finance selects the project.

3. It will now cover all Indian entities, compared to the earlier stipulation of minimum 75 per cent Indian shareholding.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only **(b) 2 and 3 only**

(c) 3 only **(d) all of the above**

15. Global Peace Index, sometime seen in News is released by:

(a) International Peace Bureau

(b) World Bank

(c) Institute for Economics and Peace

(d) Amnesty International

16. U.S has recently placed India in Strategic Trade Authorization-1 (STA-1) license exception list. Consider the following statements about STA-1 list:

1. India is the only South Asian country to be on the list.

2. This exception from the export control regime will allow the US to export sensitive technology to India without individual licences.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

17. Consider the following statements about Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs) sometime seen in news:

1. These are mutual fund like institutions that enable investments into the infrastructure sector by pooling small sums of money from multitude of individual investors.

2. InvITs are regulated by Securities and Exchange Board of India.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

18. Scutoid, recently seen in News, is:

(a) A luminous planet discovered recently.

(b) A type of mineral.

(c) A geometric shape recently discovered by scientists.

(d) A stealth submarine

19. Recently, The Andhra Pradesh government has announced Mukhya Mantri Yuva Nestam scheme:

(a) To provide unemployment allowance

(b) To encourage sports in youngsters

(c) To provide entrepreneurship skills to young women

(d) To impart technical knowledge to marginalized section in the state.

20. Consider the following statements:

1. Recently, the Asian Development bank has launched the world's first public bond created and managed using only blockchain.

2. State Bank of India (SBI) has been mandated to be the sole arranger of the bond.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

21. Bidder Information Management System (BIMS) And Bhoomi Rashi, two IT platforms has been launched by:

1. The Ministry for Road Transport & Highways

2. Ministry for Shipping and Ministry for Water Resources

3. River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 3 only (b) 2 only

(c) 1 and 2 only (d) 1, 2&3

22. Which of the following became first State to implement biofuel policy?

(a) Rajasthan

(b) Kerala

(c) Manipur

(d) Gujrat

23. Consider the following statements about State Energy Efficiency Preparedness Index (SEEPI):

1. The 1st edition of the State Energy Efficiency Preparedness Index (SEEPI) was released jointly by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) and NITI Aayog.

2. Kerala is 'Front Runner' states in the inaugural edition of the Index.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

24. Union Ministry for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) released National REDD+ Strategy. Which of the following will fund this initiative?

1. Devolution of funds to states attaching a weightage of 7.5% of the State's forest cover, as per the recommendation of Finance Commission
2. Compensatory Afforestation Fund
3. Green Climate Fund

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only **(b) 2 and 3 only**

(c) 1 and 3 only **(d) all of the above**

25. Consider the following statements with reference to Advantages of Coal bed methane (CBM), recently seen in News:

1. India has largest proven coal reserves in the world.
2. It reduces emission of greenhouse gas from coal mining.
3. Its extraction prior to coal mining activities makes mining activities safer.

Which of the above statements is are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only **(b) 2 and 3 only**

(c) 1 and 3 only **(d) all of the above**

26. Recently, government launched a web based application, PARIVESH, it is related to:

(a) It is an integrated environmental management system.

(b) It is an application to measure air quality in highly polluting cities.

(c) It is an application to track cases of mob lynching on single platform.

(d) It is an application to monitor living standard in rural areas.

27. Consider the following statements with reference to SAATHI initiative:

1. SAATHI is an initiative of Ministry of Textile.
2. Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), a public sector unit under Ministry of power will help in implementing the initiative.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

28. Consider the following statements with reference to Elephant Reserves:

1. Recently, Meghalaya government declared the Singphan Wildlife Sanctuary as an Elephant Reserve.

2. Singhbhum Elephant Reserve in Jharkhand is the first Elephant Reserve of the Country.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

29. Consider the following statement about Cheetah Reintroduction Project, frequently seen in News:

1. National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) is nodal agency for the Cheetahs reintroduction plan.

2. Cheetah is the only mammal to become extinct in India in last 1,000 years.

3. Nauradehi in Madhya Pradesh was found to be the most suitable area for the cheetahs.

Which of the above match is/are Correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1 and 3 only (d) all of the above

30. Recently, The Kaziranga National Park (KNP) had been split into two divisions — Eastern Assam Wildlife and Biswanath Wildlife Park, Consider the following statement about Kaziranga National Park:

1. Kaziranga has been recognized as an 'Important Bird Area' by Birdlife International.

2. The Diphlu River passes through this national park.

3. It is a UNESCO world heritage site.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1 and 3 only (d) all of the above

31. Recently, The Government of India has decided to ban the use of 18 pesticides on the recommendations of:

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(a) B. N. Srikrishna Committee

(b) Pradeep Kumar Sinha committee

(c) Anupam Verma Committee

(d) Madhav Chitale Committee

32. Consider the following statements with reference to recently constituted Prime Minister' Science, Technology and Innovation Council (PM-STIAC) by Union Government:

1. It is 21-member advisory panel chaired by the government's Principal Scientific Advisor.

2. It will advise the PM on all matters related to science, technology and innovation.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

33. Consider the following statements about Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Act, which was in news:

1. The law provides for up to seven years' imprisonment and fine for those indulging in such transactions.

2. The law prohibits recovery of the property held benami from benamdar by the real owner.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

34. Consider the following statement with reference to Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana that has been frequently seen in news:

1. It is India`s first healthcare scheme with its own Privacy policy.

2. National Health Authority is its implementing authority.

3. People in Socio-economic caste census can enrolled in this scheme by filling an application form with the help of Aarogyamitras.
4. It has not placed any limitation on number of family members.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1, 2 and 3 (b) 1, 2 and 4

(c) 2, 3 and 4 (d) All of the above

35. Recently, World's first-ever thermal battery plant was inaugurated in:

(a) Maharashtra

(b) Gujarat

(c) Andhra Pradesh

(d) Kerala

36. Consider the following statements about Public Financial Management System (PFMS), recently seen in News:

1. It is implemented by the Controller General of Accounts.

2. PFMS is used for Direct Benefit Transfer payments under MGNREGA scheme.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

37. Tesla's Black HOLE machine, sometimes seen in new, is related to?

(a) Ocean Exploration

(b) Waste Management

(c) Space Research

(d) Reveal the beginning of the universe

38. Identify the national park with the help of given information:

1. It creates the India's biggest biosphere reserve popularly known as the 'Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.

2. The park is surrounded by the Kabini River in the north and the Moyar River in the south while the Nugu River runs through the park.

3. It was brought under Project Tiger in 1973.

4. Recently it was in news because; Union Road Transport Ministry has asked the state government to lift the ban on vehicle movement during night in this National park.

Select the correct answer from options given below:

(a) Khangchendzonga National Park

(b) Dibru-Saikhowa National Park

(c) Bandipur National Park

(d) Namdapha National Park

39. "8888" Uprising, recently seen in news, is related to:

(a) China

(b) Saudi Arabia

(c) Egypt

(d) Myanmar

40. Consider the following statements about Vidya Lakshmi Portal which was recently seen in News:

1. It is an IT-based mechanism under the Pradhan Mantri Vidya Lakshmi Karyakram to monitor assistance given to unmarried girls above 18 for higher education.

2. It is being maintained under the guidance of Department of Financial Services, Department of Higher Education and Indian Banks Association (IBA).

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

41. "Operation Madad", recently seen in news, is related to:

(a) Indian relief assistance in Syria

(b) Humanitarian assistance to Bangladesh for Rohingya refugees

(c) Indian aid to Philippines to counter ISIS

(d) Disaster relief operation in flood-battered Kerala

42. Consider the following statements about e-Cigarettes, sometimes seen in News:

1. Recently, Tamil Nadu Government has banned sale and possession of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) or e-Cigarettes in the state.

2. Tamilnadu became 2nd state after Punjab in the country to ban e - cigarettes.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

43. Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements has been launched by:

(a) NITI AYOG

(b) Ministry of Human Resource Development

(c) Ministry of Science and Technology

(d) Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

44. Consider the following statements about 'Call for Code' initiative:

1. It is launched by IBM in partnership with Indian IT companies.

2. The aim is to build global solutions for disaster management.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

45. O-SMART scheme, sometimes seen in news is related to:

(a) Smart operation techniques in Emergency.

(b) Ocean Development activities.

(c) To increase Omega rich nutrients in Food.

(d) None of the above.

46. Consider the following statement about Spitzer Space Telescope:

1. It is a recently launched infrared space telescope.

2. It is launched by NASA.

Which of the above statement is/are Correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

47. Horizon 2020 most appropriately is related to:

(a) Empowering sports person in India.

(b) European Union's Research and Innovation programme.

(c) A Project to Jupiter.

(d) Solar power plants.

48. Consider the following statements about Fourth edition of Asian electoral stakeholder's forum (AESF-IV)

1. It was held in Thailand.

2. This was for first time AESF was held in South Asia.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

49. Venezuela crisis, recently seen in news, is mainly related to:

(a) Balance of Trade

(b) Unemployment

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(c) Deflation

(d) Hyperinflation

50. The Centre has signed MOU with Uttarakhand, UP, HP, Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi for Construction of Lakhwar Multipurpose Project on which of the following river-

(a) Ganga

(b) Yamuna

(c) Mahananda

(d) Chambal

51. Consider the following statements about Prime Minister's Research Fellows Scheme:

1. It will now be open to all potential researchers.

2. It is aimed at attracting the talent pool of the country.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

52. Consider the following statements:

1. India has been designated as a nodal centre for preparing flash-flood forecasts by the World Meteorological Organization.
2. A flash flood is a slow flooding of low-lying areas.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

53. Consider the following statements with reference to BRICS summit:

1. The tenth annual summit held in Brazil.

2. One of the new areas of BRICS cooperation proposed is establishment of a BRICS Gender and Women's Forum.

3. Xiamen Declaration is related to 10th BRICS summit.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 (b) 2 and 3

(c) 2 only (d) All of the above

54. With reference to Kanyashree scheme, consider the following statements?

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1. There would not be any ceiling for a family's annual earnings to be a beneficiary.

2. It is a conditional cash transfer scheme.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

55. Consider the following statements with reference to Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana:

1. It has been launched by government of Odisha.

2. It will provide Rs. 5 lakh per family per annum for all primary Cashless Health Care Assistance.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

56. Consider the following statements about Postal Highways:

1. It is also called Hulaki Rajmarg that across the Terai region of Nepal.

2. It is oldest highway in Nepal.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

57. If India does launch the Gaganyaan mission, it will be the fourth nation to do so after:

(a) United States, Russia and China

(b) United States, China, France

(c) China, France, Japan

(d) United States, Russia, United Kingdom

58. Consider the following statements about Repurpose Used Cooking Oil initiative (RUCO):

It has been launched by Ministry of health and family welfare.

It will enable collection and conversion of used cooking oil to bio-diesel.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

59. With reference to National Payments Corporation of India, Consider the following statements:

1. It is an umbrella organization for retail payments system in India.

2. It is a not-for-profit organization.

3. It was set up with the guidance and support of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Indian Banks' Association (IBA).

4. It has ten core promoter banks.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1, 2&3 only **(b) 2&4 only**

(c) 1 only **(d) All are correct**

60. With reference to World Congress of Philosophy, consider the following statements:

1. It is a global meeting of philosophers held every five years.

2. It is organized by UNESCO.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

61. Global Liveability Index, which ranks 140 cities for their urban quality of life based on assessments of stability, healthcare, culture and environment, education and infrastructure. Which of the following publishes the Index mentioned above?

(a) Cato and Fraser Institute

(b) World Economic Forum

(c) Economist Intelligence Unit

(d) German watch

62. National Payments Corporation of India an upgraded and renewed version of Unified Payments Interface (UPI) named as UPI 2.0. With reference to this **which of the following is/are new features?**

1. Allowing users to link their overdraft account to UPI.

2. Creation of one-time mandates and pre-authorization of transactions for payment at later date.

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3. Checking the invoice sent by merchant prior to making payment.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 & 2 only **(b) 1 & 3 only**

(c) 2 & 3 only **(d) All are correct**

63. Consider the following statements with reference to International Nitrogen Initiative:

1. Its aim is to optimize nitrogen's beneficial role in sustainable food production.

2. Recently, first time an Indian has been elected to the Chair of INI.

3. It holds conference once in every ten years.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 1&3 only**

(c) 1&2 only **(d) All of the above**

64. Millet is a common term to categorize small-seeded grasses that are often termed nutri-cereals. Which of the following characteristic is/ are true with reference to Millets?

1. Tolerant to drought.
2. Photo insensitive.
3. Resistant to climate change.
4. Cultivation of millets requires less water.
5. Grow on poor soils.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1, 2 & 3 only **(b) 1, 3 &5 only**

(c) 3 & 4 only **(d) All of the above**

65. Consider the following statements about LIGO- India project:

1. It aims to detect cosmic gravitational waves.

2. It is piloted by ISRO.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

66. With reference to members in Saltwater Crocodile, consider the following statements:

1. They are least concerned in IUCN red list.

2. They are hypercarnivorous apex predator.

3. They are the largest riparian predator in the world.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 1&2 only

(c) 2 only (d) All of the above

67. With reference to World Hindi Conference, Consider the following statements:

1. Recently, it's 11th conference held in Mauritius.

2. The first World Hindi Conference was held in 1975 in Nagpur.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

68. All India Rural Financial Inclusion Survey 2016-17 has been released by which of the following:

(a) NABARD

(b) Niti Ayog

(c) Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare

(d) Indian Agricultural Research Institute

69. Consider the following statements about P-Notes:

1. It is offshore/overseas derivative instruments (ODIs).

2. It is issued by SEBI to overseas investors.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

70. The Supreme Court has accepted the Centre's proposal to use hologram-based coloured stickers on vehicles, plying in the Delhi-National Capital Region (NCR), to indicate the nature of the fuel used. With reference to this which of the following is/ are correct?

1. The Hologram-based sticker of light-blue colour will be used for diesel-driven vehicles.
2. Sticker of orange colour will be used for petrol and CNG-run vehicles.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

71. With reference to Mental Healthcare Act, 2017, Consider the following statements

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1. It is mandatory to provide medical insurance for treatment of mental illness.

2. It Decriminalized suicide and prohibited electro-convulsive therapy.

3. A mentally ill person cannot nominate a person who can take decision on their behalf.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 2 only (b) 1&2 only

(c) 2&3 only (d) All of the above

72. Microcystallites are very small crystals developed by researchers from Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bengaluru. With reference to this Microcystallites are new type of:

(a) Diamonds

(b) Silver

(c) Gold

(d) Iron

73. Which of the following state has recently launched for the first time Disaster Response Force (DRF) vehicles?

(a) Telangana

(b) Maharashtra

(c) Andhra Pradesh

(d) Jharkhand

74. Data localization refers to:

(a) Credit information of the all the public sector banks at one Centre.

(b) Storing data on any device that is physically present within the borders of a specific country.

(c) It is data of Locality based Pin code of the cities.

(d) None of the above.

75. HELINA recently seen in news is a

(a) Weapon Locating Radar

(b) Helicopter to be purchased from USA

(c) Anti-Tank Guided Missile.

(d) Fast attack craft

76. Government of India has recently gifted Panini language Laboratory to which of the following country:

(a) Mauritius

(b) Nepal

(c) Indonesia

(d) Australia

77. Consider the following matches:

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1. Hand in Hand exercise: India-France

2. Vajra Prahar Exercise: India-USA

3. Dharma Guardian Exercise: India-Japan

4. Exercise Maitree: India-Thailand

Which of the following matches is/are correct?

(a) 1, 2 and 3 only (b) 2, 3 and 4 only

(c) 1, 3 and 4 only (d) all of the above

78. Recently, we have seen weakening of Indian Rupee. In the light of this statement what are the impacts of this:

1. Country's imports become more expensive.
2. Growth in domestic tourism can be seen.
3. Export-oriented industries may also create more jobs.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1&2 only (b) 2&3 only

(c) 1&3 only (d) All of the above

79. OSIRIS-REx Mission has been launched for:

(a) An asteroid

(b) A planet near earth

(c) Natural Satellite

(d) Sun like stars

80. Recently, The world's largest 3-D printed reef has been submerged in which of the following island country:

(a) Indonesia

(b) Japan

(c) Maldives

(d) Seychelles

81. Consider the following statements with reference to Consider the following statements about National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB):

1. It has been designated as the nodal agency for monitoring the complaints for child pornography and sexual violence videos.
2. It would coordinate with service providers and ask them to block malicious videos and contents.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

82. Consider the following statement about NOTA recently seen in news:

1. It is not allowed in Rajya Sabha elections.

Only IAS

2. If it gets more than 50 percent votes in Lok Sabha elections, it will invite re-election in the constituency.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

83. India wage Report is published by:

(a) Ministry of Labour & Employment

(b) International Labour Organisation

(c) Niti Ayog

(d) Oxfam

84. The centre has unveiled the draft International Air Connectivity (IAC) scheme. Consider the following statements with reference to this:

1. It envisages increasing the international ticketing to 20 crore by 2027.

2. Ministry of external affairs will be the implementing agency.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

85. Recently, FSSAI has notified food safety standards for honey. With reference to this Consider the following notified standards:

1. FSSAI has fixed maximum 5% limit for sucrose content in the honey.

2. If a product is sold as honey then food additives should not be added to it.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

86. Which of the following country is NOT the member of QUAD Grouping?

(a) Australia

(b) Japan

(c) South Korea

(d) India

87. With reference to International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), consider the following statements:

1. Recently, it has launched an initiative to assess the damage to the rich cultural and built heritage in Kerala.

2. It is a non-government organization.

3. It is an advisory body to the UNESCO for cultural heritage

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1&3 only **(b) 1 only**

(c) 3 only **(d) All of the above**

88. International Buddhist Conclave 2018 held in which of the following state:

(a) Maharashtra

(b) Gujarat

(c) Bihar

(d) Uttar Pradesh

89. Consider the following statements with reference to Poshan Maah:

1. It has been organized by Ministry of health and family welfare.

2. Its objective is to take the messages of POSHAN to the grass root level.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

90. Consider the following statement with reference to National Logistics Portal:

1. It is being developed by Ministry of Communications and Information Technology.

2. It will link all the stakeholders of EXIM, domestic trade and all trade activities on a single platform.

3. There are four main component of the portal.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 3 only **(b) 1 and 2 only**

(c) 2 and 3 only **(d) All of the above**

91. Which of the following applications have been launched by CJI to Facilitate Litigants and Lawyers?

1. e-Filing

2. e-Pay

3. National Service and Tracking of Electronic Processes

(a) 1 and 3 only (b) 1 and 2 only

(c) 2 and 3 only (d) All of the above

92. Recently, 5 Thematic Reports on Sustainable Development in Indian Himalayan Region has been launched. Which of the following has launched this report?

(a) Niti Ayog

(b) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

(c) Environmental Investment Organization

(d) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

93. NASA has launched the Ice, Cloud and Land Elevation Satellite-2 (ICESat-2) mission. It is launched for which of the following:

(a) Pluto

(b) Mars

(c) Earth

(d) Moon

94. With reference to Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban), consider the following statements:

1. It is implemented by Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation.

2. It envisions provision of Housing for All by 2025.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

95. With reference to Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), consider the following statements:

1. It has started operating its first regional centre in Odisha.

2. It is one of the largest non-governmental organizations in India.

3. It has been designated as a 'Scientific and Industrial Research Organization.

Which of the above statement is/are correct?

(a) 2 and 3 only (b) 2 only

(c) 3 only **(d) All of the above**

96. G20 Digital Economy Ministerial Meeting held in which of the following countries:

(a) India

(b) Mexico

(c) Argentina

(d) South Africa

97. Consider the following statements with reference to Biofuel-powered plane:

1. India has become the first country in the world to have such kind of Plane.

2. Spice Jet has operated India's first biofuel-powered flight.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

98. With reference to Exercise Swadesh Dashan Scheme consider the following statement:

1. Its objective is to develop theme-based tourist circuits in the country.

2. It is 100% centrally funded for the project components undertaken for public funding.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

99. Which of the following country is NOT member of North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)?

(a) Canada

(b) Mexico

(c) US

(d) Cuba

100. Consider the following statements about Aeolus satellite:

1. It has been launched by NASA.

2. It will measure winds around the globe and help improve weather forecasting.

Which of the above statements is/are NOT correct?

(a) 1 only **(b) 2 only**

(c) Both 1 and 2 **(d) neither 1 nor 2**

"Planner For Test Series"		
Date	Test No.	Syllabus (Current Affairs month)
25 November	Test: 1	May
9 December	Test: 2	June
23 December	Test: 3	July
6 January	Test: 4	August
20 January	Test: 5	September + October
3 February	Test: 6	November + December
17 February	Test: 7	January, May + June
3 March	Test: 8	February, July + August
For registration Visit: vedio.onlyias.in		Fees: 1600 Rs.

"Planner For Test Series"		
Date	Test No.	Syllabus (Current Affairs month)
17 March	Test: 9	March, September + October
24 March	Test: 10	March, November + December
31 March	Test: 11	March, January + February
7 April	Test: 12	Full Test
14 April	Test: 13	Full Test
21 April	Test: 14	Full Test
28 April	Test: 15	Full Test
5 May	Test: 16	Full Test
For registration Visit: vedio.onlyias.in		Fees: 1600 Rs.

Explanation

1. Answer (d) all are correct

• **It was in News because recently,** the Lok Sabha passed the Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2017 to allow for the proxy voting by the Non-Residential Indians through amendment in Section 60 (special procedure for voting by certain classes of persons).

• **Under proxy voting**, a registered elector can delegate his voting power to a representative.

• This was introduced in 2003 for elections to the Lok Sabha and Assemblies, but on a limited scale.

• Only a "classified service voter" — a definition that includes members of the armed forces, BSF, CRPF, CISF, General Engineering Reserve Force and Border Road Organisation — is allowed to nominate a proxy to cast vote on his behalf in his absence.

• A classified service voter can also vote by postal ballot.

2. Answer (a) Only 1 and 2 are Correct

• Recently, India and the USA began a new generation of military and security cooperation by signing Communications

Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA).

• It will allow U.S. Navy access to India's own secure communication network and also that the information shared with the U.S. will be accessible to Pakistan: this agreement may harm India's strategic autonomy by making its own communication network vulnerable to US spying. **Hence 1st statement is correct.**

• Some critics are concerned that the US will retain control over its equipment sold to India under this pact and may manipulate decision-making. **Hence 2nd statement is also correct.**

• It allows sharing of classified information from US Government and American companies with Indian government and defence Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) but not with Indian private companies. **Hence 3rd statement is NOT correct.**

3. Answer (d) Nepal

• Recently, the 4th summit of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) was held in Nepal. **Hence option (d) is correct.**

• The meeting is taking place after a gap of four years; the 3rd BIMSTEC Summit took place in Nay Pyi Taw in 2014

Significance of BIMSTEC

• Around 22% of the world's population lives in the seven countries around the Bay of Bengal, with a combined GDP close to $2.7 trillion. A fourth of the world's traded goods cross the bay every year.

• It has high economic potential, given the region's economic dynamism, huge markets and rich natural resources.

• It appears as a connector to multiple regional initiatives. Among seven-member countries, five members of BIMSTEC are also members of SAARC, two are part of ASEAN and six are part of SASEC.

• For India, it is a natural platform to fulfil our key foreign policy priorities of 'Neighbourhood First' and 'Act East'.

• Stagnation of SAARC is also a key reason for India to reach out to BIMSTEC as stagnation limited the scope of India's growing economic aspirations as well as the role it could play in improving regional governance.

• BIMSTEC provides new battleground for India-China. It could allow India to push a constructive agenda to counter Chinese investments such as in Belt and Road initiative, and follow international norms for connectivity projects which

Chinese projects are widely seen as violating.

• It could develop codes of conduct that preserve freedom of navigation and apply existing law of the seas regionally.

• It could stem the region's creeping militarisation by instituting, for instance, a Bay of Bengal Zone of Peace that seeks to limit any bellicose behaviour of extra regional power

4. Answer (b) only 2 is correct

• **Recently,** The Varieties of Democracy Report for 2018 (V-Dem) has been released which provides the most sweeping global examination of democracy.

• It is an international research project which aims to develop new indicators of democracy in all countries all over the world from 1789 to the present.

• The project is led by the V-Dem Institute at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

• It is **backed by the European Union** and funded by a multitude of different institutions (government and non-government) and think tanks**. Hence statement 1 is NOT Correct.**

• India is indicted as a "backslider" since the quality of democracy has declined over the past ten years and sharply declined since 2014. **Hence 2nd statement is correct.**

5. Answer (c) both 1 and 2 are correct

• The third edition of Indian Ocean Conference is set to begin on August 27 at Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam.

• The theme of the two- day conference will focus on 'Building Regional Architectures', particularly with regards to trade and commerce, security and governance.

• This year, the Indian Ocean Conference will emphasize on better cooperation, strategic collaboration and governance architectures.

6. Answer (a) only 1 is correct.

• Idukki dam in Kerala is constructed across the **Periyar river**, the longest river in Kerala. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

• It is one of the highest arch dams in the continent, measuring 550ft in height.

• It was commissioned in the year 1973 with financial aid **from Canada (Not USSR)**. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**

• It is built between two granite hills such as Kuravanmala and kuravathimala.

• It is owned by the Kerala State Electricity Board.

• It supports a hydroelectric power station in Moolamattom.

• The hydel project is receiving water from two other dams at Cheruthoni and Kulamavu.

• It has prompted authorities in Kerala to issue an "Orange Alert" – precautionary messages to the public in light of possibility of water release from the reservoir.

• The dam is going to be reopened after 26 years. Previous opening was in 1981 and 1992.

7. Answer (b) Finance Ministry

• The administrative control of Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (CRIF) has been transferred to the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), Finance Ministry. **Hence option (b) is correct.**

• So far, it was under the domain of **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.**

• Over the last one and a half decade, the Central Road Fund (CRF) was major revenue for the government to finance ambitious road projects.

• The CRF launched in 2000 is basically a cess imposed along with excise duty on petrol and diesel.

• The cess revenue was accrued to the CRF which was uniquely created and out of this major road projects were financed ever since its launch.

8. Answer (d) neither 1 nor 2.

• **First statement is wrong because** Additional Surveillance Measures was introduced recently by **SEBI (**Not RBI**)**.

• **Second statement is wrong because** it is a surveillance method in which SEBI impose trading curbs on excessively volatile stocks in the Indian market.

• For example, if the "Spread" - Price variation of a stock between the high and low price, in the last three months is 200 per cent or more, then it will be placed under ASM.

• Once a stock is caught in the ASM net, it attracts a bunch of stricter exchange rules on intra-day price movements.

• Such curbs discourage speculators and intra-day traders from taking heavy positions in stocks and will result in stock prices to drop.

• Stocks of PSUs, securities with derivative products and stocks under

Graded Surveillance Measure are exempted from ASM net.

9. Answer (d) Labour Bureau, Ministry of Labour & Employment

• This topic came in PIB when, The All-India CPI-IW for April, 2018 increased by 1 point.

10. Answer (b) only 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are correct.

• Recently, five Caspian Sea States – **Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan** - signed a breakthrough agreement on Caspian Sea's legal status.

• The 5 nations have tried to define the Caspian Sea's legal status since the collapse of Soviet Union in order to divide up the waters and its natural resources for new drillings and pipelines. Iran, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan have contested the ownership of several oil and gas fields.

• According to an estimate by the US Energy Information Administration in 2013, the Caspian offshore reserves contain at least 20 Billion Barrels of Oil and more than 240 trillion Cubic Feet of natural gas.

• These nations have already developed offshore oil and gas reserves that are located near enough to their coast.

• Projects in the northernmost waters- Kazakhstan's giant Kashagan field and Russia's Filanovsky and Korchagin deposits- are seen as sources of future oil-output growth for the countries.

11. Answer (b) Maintenance of Tiger Reserves

• The android-based monitoring software M-STrIPES will be used across all the Tiger Reserves of the country.

Recently, it was in News because Forest Department staff in seven forest ranges in

• Coimbatore Forest Division were given training to use M-STrIPES (Monitoring System for Tiger-Intensive Protection and Ecological Status), an exclusive tiger monitoring application developed by the National Tiger Conservation Authority. (The Hindu)

• It was launched by the Indian Government in 2010 in some tiger reserves.

• **The same question has been asked in UPSC Prelims 2017.**

12. Answer (c) Both 1 and 2 are Correct.

• The first ever Nepal-India Think Tankn Summit is going to begin in Kathmandu.**Hence statement 1 is correct.**

• It is being jointly organized by the Asian Institute of Diplomacy and International Affairs and Nehru Memorial Museum Library

• It aims to foster greater collaboration and knowledge-sharing among the think tanks of the two countries.

• The summit is proposed to become an annual feature for the participating organisations and it will be hosted alternatively in Nepal and India. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

13. Answer (d) all is Correct.

• Recently, India has been elected as the President of the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) for a period of two years.

• President status will help India in leveraging itself as the broadcasting and media hub in Asia Pacific Region.

• India got the presidency of the organisation for the first time by defeating Iran in the election. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

• It is a regional inter-governmental organisation servicing countries of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) in the field of electronic media development.

• It was established in 1977 under the **auspices of UNESCO** and the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) is a founding organisation of the Institute and is a non-voting member of the General Conference.**Hence statement 2 is also correct.**

• It is hosted by Malaysia and its secretariat is located in Kuala Lampur.

• The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are also founding organisations of the Institute. **Hence statement 3 is also correct.**

• Its function is to achieve a vibrant and cohesive electronic media environment in the Asia-Pacific region through policy and mobilizing the intellectual and technological resources available within the national broadcasting organizations

14. Answer (c) only 3 is Correct.

• Recently, government extended the Concessional Financing Scheme (CFS) for five years till 2023. **Hence statement 1 is NOT correct.**

• The scheme is aim to support Indian entities bidding for strategically important infrastructure projects abroad.

• Under the scheme government provide counter guarantee and interest equalization of 2 % to EXIM Bank to offer concessional finance to any foreign Govt. or controlled entity, if any Indian entity, succeeds in getting contract for the execution of a project.

• It will now cover all Indian entities, compared to the earlier stipulation of minimum 75 per cent Indian shareholding. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

• EXIM Bank extends credit at a rate not exceeding LIBOR (avg. of six months) + 100 bps. The repayment of the loan is guaranteed by the foreign govt.

• Under the scheme **Ministry of External Affairs** selects the project, keeping in view strategic interest of India and sends the same to the Department of Economic affairs. **Hence statement 2 is also NOT correct.**

15. Answer (c) Institute for Economics and Peace

• India's rank has marginally improved in "global peacefulness", at a time when there is an overall decline of global peace owing to escalation of violence in West Asia and and North Africa, according to the Global Peace Index (GPI), released by Australia-based Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP).

•The IEP is the world's leading think tank that develops metrics to analyse peace and quantify its economic value.

• India's GPI rank was 137 out of 163 countries in 2017, when the year 2016 was assessed. In 2018, when the year 2017 is assessed, India's rank moved up to 136. This is in line with the performance of some of the South Asian countries. "

•South Asia experienced the largest regional improvement in peacefulness," the report noted. It also noted that peace continues to record a "gradual, sustained fall" across the world.

16. Answer (c) both 1 and 2 is Correct

• U.S has recently placed India in Strategic Trade Authorization-1 (STA-1) license exception list.

• United States eased export controls for high technology product sales to India, granting it the same access as NATO allies — Australia, Japan and South Korea.

• STA allows for license exception with regards to exports from the US.

• This exception from the export control regime will allow the US to export sensitive technology to India without individual licences. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

• This type of US government authorization allows a certain item to be exported under defined conditions without a transaction-specific license.

• It is a privilege hitherto reserved only for 36 countries, mostly NATO members or key allies like Japan and South Korea.

• India is the only South Asian country to be on the list**. Hence statement 2 is also correct.**

• It provides India with greater supply chain conditions for defence and other high-tech products.

17. Answer (c) both is Correct

• **It was in news because,** the government is identifying assets, including rail lines, national highways and power transmission lines, for monetising through infrastructure investment trusts (InvITs).

• These are mutual fund like institutions that enable investments into the infrastructure sector by pooling small sums of money from multitude of individual investors for directly investing in infrastructure so as to return a portion of the income to unit holders of InvITs, who pooled in the money. **Hence statement 1 is Correct.**

• InvITs are regulated by Securities and Exchange Board of India. **Hence statement 2 is also correct.**

18. Answer (c) a geometric shape recently discovered by scientists.

• Scientists have identified new geometric shape called scutoid while studying epithelial cells.

•Epithelial tissue is one of four kinds of tissue that forms human body which acts as safety shield of body that make up cell walls lining our blood.

•Scutoid shape has five sides on one end and six on the other and a triangular surface on one of its longer edges. And it is completely new to geometry and resembles beetle's scutellum (shield-like structure) from top-down view.

19. Answer (a) to provide unemployment allowance

• Recently, The Andhra Pradesh government has announced Mukhya Mantri Yuva Nestam scheme **to provide unemployment allowance** of Rs 1000 per month to the unemployed youth (between 22-35 years of age) through

DBT using Aadhar. **Hence option (a) is correct.**

20. Answer (d) neither 1 nor 2

• **First statement is wrong because** The World Bank (**Not ADB**) has launched the world's first public bond created and managed using only blockchain in order to test how the technology might improve current bond sales practices.

• The project is called 'BONDI' (Blockchain Operated New Debt Instrument), which is also reference to the Bondi Beach in Sydney.

• **Second statement is wrong because** Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA) has been mandated by the World Bank to be the sole arranger of the bond.

• It is a Kangaroo bond (foreign bonds issued in Australia in local currency).

Benefits of Blockchain Bonds

• The launch of the blockchain bond is an initial step in moving bond sales away from manual processes towards automation.

• Blockchain technology could help in cutting down bond settlement time "from T+2 days currently to T+2 minutes".

• The technology has potential to deliver substantial cost savings as intermediary activities can be eventually reduced or removed.

• It also improves the reputation of crypto-technologies which are currently viewed suspiciously.

21. Answer (d) all 1, 2 and 3 are correct

• **The Ministry for Road Transport & Highways, Ministry for Shipping and Ministry for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation** had launched two IT initiatives – BIMS & Bhoomi Rashi – with aim to expedite pre-construction processes relating to bidding and land acquisition respectively.

Bidder Information Management System (BIMS)

• The portal will work as a data base of information about bidders, covering basic details, civil works experience, cash accruals and network, annual turnover etc. BIMS will be used by all the project implementation agencies of the Ministry.

• It is aimed at streamlining the process of prequalification of bidders for Engineering Procurement Construction Mode of contracts for National Highway

works with enhanced transparency and objectivity.

• The bidders would be responsible for ensuring that their latest details are available on the BIMS portal.

• The portal will be operated in conjunction with the CPPP portal for invitation of bids for civil works for EPC mode.

• It is estimated that BIMS portal will significantly reduce the procurement time for projects through an objective and transparent online evaluation system thereby leading to accelerated project implementation.

Bhoomi Rashi

• It is a portal that has been developed in collaboration with National Informatics Centre (NIC), comprising the entire revenue data of the country. The entire process flow, from submission of draft notification by the State Government to its approval by the Ministry is online.

• The portal had been created for expediting the process of publication of notifications.

• It has been integrated with Public Financial Management System (PFMS). With this payment of Compensation by the Ministry to the beneficiaries will be just-in-time, and without any parking of funds.

• It will act as one of the key functionalities to facilitate payment related to compensation for land acquisition to all the beneficiaries directly through the Bhoomi Rashi system.

22. Answer (a) Rajasthan

• Recently, Rajasthan became first state in the country to implement National Policy on Biofuels unveiled by Union Government in May 2018. **Henec option (a) is Correct.**

• Its implementation was approved by high-power Biofuel Authority.

• It was also decided that Government will release Biofuel Rules, 2018.

• Under this policy, State Government will lay emphasis on increasing production of oilseeds and establish Centre for Excellence in Udaipur to promote research in fields of alternative fuels and energy resources.

• Biodiesel plant of capacity of eight tonnes per day already has been installed in State with financial assistance of Indian Railways.

• State government will give emphasis to promote marketing of biofuels and generate awareness about them.

• State Rural Livelihood Development Council will also encourage women's self help groups (SHGs) to explore the scope for additional income through supply of biodiesel.

23. Answer (c) both is correct.

• The 1st edition of the State Energy Efficiency Preparedness Index (SEEPI) was released jointly by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) and NITI Aayog. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

• The index accessed state policies and programmes aimed at improving energy efficiency in five key sectors.

• The sectors are buildings, industries, municipalities, transportation, agriculture and electricity distribution.

• The criteria taken into account includes,

1. Sector-wise energy consumption,

2. Energy saving potential

3. States' influence in implementing energy efficiency

• It has classified states in to four categories - front runner, achiever, contender and aspirant, based upon their efforts towards energy efficiency.

• The 'Front Runner' states in the inaugural edition of the Index are: Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, and Rajasthan based on available data. **Henec statement 2 is also correct.**

• These states are categorized as front runners.

• Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Haryana have been categorised in the second best category of 'achiever' states.

24. Answer (d) all is correct

• Union Ministry for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) released National REDD+ Strategy, which will help to fulfill India's NDC commitment under Paris Agreement of climate change.

Need for National REDD+ Strategy

• Forest is the second-largest land use in India after agriculture.

• Forestry sector in India can make positive contribution for climate change mitigation like carbon mitigation services of India's forest by improving carbon stocks (carbon pools).

• As estimated, REDD+ programme could provide for capture of around 1 billion tonnes of additional CO2 over the next 3 decades and significant financial incentives as carbon services under

REDD+ including flow of positive incentives to local communities.

Fund for Initiative:

1. Devolution of funds to states attaching a weightage of 7.5% of the State's forest cover, as per the recommendation of Finance Commission
2. Compensatory Afforestation Fund
3. Green Climate Fund

25. Answer (b) only 2 and 3 is correct.

• **First statement is wrong because,** India has **fourth largest (Not Largest)** proven coal reserves in the world.

• Coal Bed Methane (CBM) is an unconventional form of natural gas found in coal deposits or coal seams.

• CMB is formed during the process of coalification, the transformation of plant material into coal.

•It is considered a valuable energy resource with reserves and production having grown nearly every year since 1989. Varied methods of recovery make CBM astable source of energy.

• CBM is generic term used for gas that is found in adsorbed state in coal. CBM is natural gas found in coal seams.

• It mainly consists of Methane (CH4) with minor amounts of nitrogen (N2), carbon dioxide (CO2) and heavier hydrocarbons like ethane (C2H6). It is a clean source of energy.

• During the initial years of mining, CBM was vented out and wasted into the atmosphere as it was considered as serious safety hazard while conducting coal mining operations.

• However, later with advancement of technology it was possible to extract CBM, a precious energy resource and an unconventional form of natural gas.

26. Answer (a) it is an integrated environmental management system.

• **Recently,** government launched an integrated environmental management system named; PARIVESH (**Proactive and Responsive facilitation by Interactive, Virtuous and Environmental Single-window Hub**). **Hence option (a) is correct.**

About PARIVESH

• It is a web based, role-based workflow application which has been developed for online submission and monitoring of the proposals submitted by the proponents for seeking Environment, Forest, Wildlife and CRZ Clearances from Central, State and district level authorities.

• It automates the entire tracking of proposals which includes online submission of a new proposal, editing/updating the details of proposals and displays status of the proposals at each stage of the workflow.

• The system includes monitoring of compliance reports including geo-tagged images of the site by regulatory body or inspecting officers even through the Mobile App for enhanced compliance monitoring

• It also provides access to previous Environment Impact Assessment Reports, which is a valuable reservoir of information.

Significance of PARIVESH

• It will improve the entire process of appraisal and environmental clearance because delay in environment clearance can cause a huge monetary loss and negatively impact business prospect of that region.

• It will ensure transparency and expedite the process of granting clearance by enabling project proponent and citizen to track and interact with scrutiny officers, generate online clearance letters.

• The Project Proponent can also track the movement of their application at different stages and can see the findings of the Expert Appraisal Committee on their project proposal.

• It has been developed in pursuance of the spirit of 'Digital India' and capturing the essence of "minimum government and maximum governance".

27. Answer (c) both is correct

• Sustainable and Accelerated Adoption of efficient Textile technologies to Help Small Industries (SAATHI) is a joint initiative by Ministries of Power and Textiles. **Hence statement 1 is Correct.**

• It aims to accelerate the adoption of energy efficient textile technologies in the powerloom sector and promote cost savings.

• Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), a public sector unit under Ministry of power will help in implementing the initiative. **Hence statement 2 is also correct.**

• EESL will replace old inefficient electric motors with energy efficient motors.

• It would procure energy efficient power looms and other kits in bulk and provide them to the small and medium powerloom units at no upfront cost.

28. Answer (b) only 2 is correct

• **Recently, Nagaland** (Not Meghalaya) government declared the Singphan

Wildlife Sanctuary as an Elephant Reserve, with the approval of central government. **Hence statement 1 is INCORRECT.**

• Elephant is National Heritage Animal and categorised as Endangered under IUCN list.

• It is under schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and in Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES).

• **Singhbhum Elephant Reserve in Jharkhand is the first Elephant Reserve of the Country. Hence statement 2 is correct.**

• Karnataka has the highest number of elephants followed by Assam and Kerala respectively.

About the Singhphan Elephant Reserve:

• It is located in Mon district of Nagaland and spreads over an area of 5825 acres.

• It has huge tracts of forest, strategically located in contiguity with the Abhaypur Reserve Forest of Assam.

• Presently, elephant distribution habitat in Nagaland is highly fragmented, this move will give better protection and conservation of elephants in the state.

• After the declaration it became the 30th Elephant Reserve in the country.

Other Protected areas in Nagaland: Intanki National Park, Puliebadze Wildlife Sanctuary, Fakim Wildlife Sanctuary and Rangapahar Wildlife Sanctuary.

29. Answer (b) only 2 and 3 are correct

• **Recently,** Madhya Pradesh forest department seeks to revive the plan to reintroduce Cheetahs in Nauradehi sanctuary.

• **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)**, is nodal agency for the Cheetahs reintroduction plan. **Hence statement 1 is wrong.**

• In 2009 Project Cheetah was launched and Kuno Wildlife Sanctuary (MP) and Shahgarh area in Rajasthan were also identified as other two sites for cheetah reintroduction plan.

• Nauradehi was found to be the most suitable area for the cheetahs as its forests are not very dense to restrict the fast movement of Cheetahs.**Hence statement 3 is correct.**

• Kaziranga protected area was established in 1904 and is located on the edge of the Eastern Himalayan biodiversity hotspot. It is a UNESCO world heritage site.

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• The park is home to large breeding populations of elephants, wild water buffalo, and swamp deer other than the one-horned rhino.

• Kaziranga is recognized as an 'Important Bird Area' by Birdlife International for the conservation of avifaunal species.

• There are five ranges in the Eastern Assam Wildlife Division. These are Kaziranga (Kohora), Eastern Range (Agaratoli), Western Range (Bagori), Burhapahar Range and Northern Range with headquarters at Biswanath. Of these ranges, four are located on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra, while the Northern Range is located on the north bank of the river. 47 www.visionias.in ©Vision IAS Significance of the move

• It will make India the only country in the world to host six of the world's eight large cats, including lions, tigers, jaguars, panthers and leopards.

• Cheetah is the flagship species of the grasslands. This will help dryland ecosystems of India to return to their natural state.

About Cheetahs:

• It was declared extinct in India in 1952 and last spotted in Chhattisgarh 1947.

• The only mammal to become extinct in India in last 1,000 years.**Hence statement 2 is also correct.**

• IUCN status: Vulnerable

About National Tiger Conservation Authority:

• It is a statutory body and has overarching supervisory/coordination role as provided in the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

• It approves the Tiger Conservation Plan prepared by the State Governments.

About National Biodiversity Authority (NBA):

•The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) was established by the Central Government in 2003 to implement India's Biological Diversity Act (2002).

• The NBA is a Statutory Body and it performs facilitative, regulatory and advisory functions for the Government of India on issues of conservation, sustainable use of biological resources and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of biological resources.

30. Answer (d) all are correct

• The Kaziranga National Park (KNP) had been split into two divisions — the

existing Eastern Assam Wildlife and the new Biswanath Wildlife park with Brahmputra flowing in between.

• Kaziranga is recognized as an 'Important Bird Area' by Birdlife International for the conservation of avifaunal species. **Hence statement 1 is Correct.**

•The Diphlu river passes through this national park. **Hence statement 2 is also correct.**

• Kaziranga protected area was established in 1904 and is located on the edge of the Eastern Himalayan biodiversity hotspot. It is a UNESCO world heritage site. **Hence statement 3 is also correct.**

•The park is home to large breeding populations of elephants, wild water buffalo, and swamp deer other than the one-horned rhino.

31. Answer (c) Anupam Verma Committee

• **B. N. Srikrishna Committee:** Expert committee constituted by Meity for data protection.

• **Pradeep Kumar Sinha committee:** The committee constituted by the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council to identify and recommend eligible persons for appointment as the chairman and members of the National Anti-profiteering Authority.

• **Madhav Chitale Committee:** Constituted by Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation to Prepare guidelines for desiltation of Ganga River from Bhimgauda (Uttarakhand) to Farakka (West Bengal) . It recommended an institute be established for flood routing studies

• The Government of India has decided to ban the use of 18 pesticides following the recommendations of the Anupam Verma Committee. 45 www.visionias.in ©Vision IAS

• The complete ban of 12 pesticides would come into effect immediately while the rest 6 would be banned from December 31, 2020.

• The decision is based on Anupam Verma committee which was constituted in 2013 to review the use of 66 pesticides (which are either banned or restricted in other countries.) recommended a ban on 13 'extremely hazardous' pesticides , phasing out of six 'moderately hazardous' ones by 2020, and review of 27 pesticides in 2018.

32. Answer (c) both 1 and 2 is correct

• Union Government recently constituted **new 21-member advisory**

panel chaired by the government's Principal Scientific Advisor, on science, technology and innovation called Prime Minister's Science, Technology and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC). **Hence statement 1 is Correct.**

• The council includes secretaries from various departments/ministries and is expected to act as a high level advisory body to several ministries and execute mission-oriented programmes. The new panel will advise the PM on all matters related to science, technology and innovation, and would also monitor the implementation of the PM's vision. **Hence statement 2 is also correct**

• It will replace two scientific advisory committees for the prime minister and the cabinet, and is aimed to streamline as well as cut down the number of committees and councils.

• It will also advise government on developing 'Clusters of Excellence' in science including city-based R&D clusters. It will work to bring together all science and technology partners from academia and institutes to industries near such centres or cities.

33. Answer (c) both is correct

• **It was in News because recently,** the prosecution of accused persons in almost 100 confirmed cases instituted under the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act has been scuttled as the special courts meant for the purpose have not yet been set up across the country.

• Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Act, 2016, designed to curb black money and passed by parliament in August, came into effect on November 1, 2016.

• The new law amends the 1988 Benami Transactions Act.

• The law provides for up to seven years' imprisonment and fine for those indulging in such transactions.**Hence statement 1 is correct.**

• The law prohibits recovery of the property held benami from benamdar by the real owner.**Hence statement 2 is correct.**

• As per the Act, properties held benami are liable for confiscation by then government, without payment of compensation.

• An appellate mechanism has been provided under the act, in the form of an adjudicating authority and appellate tribunal.

• According to the government, the four authorities who will conduct inquiries or investigations are the Initiating Officer,

Approving Authority, Administrator and Adjudicating Authority.

34. Answer (b) Only 1, 2 and 4 are correct

•**3rd statement is wrong because** People in SECC will get automatically enrolled in this scheme.

• PMJAY has become the first healthcare scheme with Privacy policy.

• This scheme was earlier announced in 2018 budget speech as PM Jan Arogya Abhiyan within the umbrella scheme of Ayushman Bharat (National Health Protection Mission).

• A miniature version of this scheme is already going on in Telangana from years. The entire IT platform used for this scheme will be outsourced from there.

• Since the scheme is based on Aadhar, several recommendations of Srikrishna Committee have been incorporated and Right to Privacy has been kept intact.

• The scheme will have its own Data Privacy Policy (Psudonymisation, anonymistaion and data minimisation, etc. will be done along with encryption, firewalls, etc. at various level).

• Digital health data will not be disclosed for commercial purposes, or to insurers, employers, or pharma companies.

• People will have right to request access to copies of their personal data, information on the processing activities carried out with it, request restriction of access or even withdraw consent.

• **National Health Authority** will be its implementing authority.

• There will be a provision of Rs 5 lakh per annum as health assurance (no premium to be paid by beneficiary) for each family and free of cost treatment for serious diseases.

• The cashless benefits can be availed from any public or private empaneled hospital across India. However, the payment will be done on Package rate basis (involving secondary and tertiary care) defined by Government.

• This will be the world's largest government-sponsored healthcare scheme (10 Crore family or 50 Crore people) covering a population the size of the US, Canada and Mexico.

• States are free to choose the mode of implementation, which could either be insurance-based, trust-route or mixed model.

• Benefits of the scheme: It will provide good quality, affordable healthcare to

all, new infrastructure in tier II and III cities will reduce regional disparity, role of middle men and money lender will decrease and employment opportunities will be created in health and IT sector. It will be Rights based approach and will help migrant communities as well.

35. Answer (c) Andhra Pradesh

• **Recently, World's first-ever thermal battery** plant was inaugurated in **Andhra Pradesh.**

• Conventional battery technology is based on the system of charging/discharging cycles that are driven by electricity.

• For example, the Lithium-ion battery consists of electric charges being transferred from electrodes. Energy is derived from this battery, when lithium atoms turn into lithium ions (Li+), and get stored when this reaction reverses.

• Thermal batteries, on the other hand, use thermal energy to operate, i.e., the energy created by temperature differences.

• A thermal battery consists of two parts: a cool zone known as sink, and a hot source called source.

• Both these sides consist of compounds known as phase-changing materials (PCMs), which can change their state of matter on the basis of a physical/chemical reaction.

• When the sink of a thermal battery receives heat, it transforms physically or chemically, thereby storing energy, while the source cools down.

• During operation, the sink is cooled down, so it releases the stored energy, while the source heats up. Depending on the nature of the battery, the system can derive heat from any source, which makes a thermal battery very versatile.

36. Answer (c) both 1 and 2 is correct

•The Public Financial Management System (PFMS) is an end-to- end solution for processing payments, tracking, monitoring, accounting, reconciliation and reporting.

• It is administered by the Department of Expenditure and It is implemented by the

Controller General of Accounts. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

• PFMS is also used for DBT payments under MGNREGA and other notified schemes of the Government of India.

• It provides scheme managers a unified platform for tracking releases and monitoring their last mile utilisation.

• It provides platform for efficient management of funds through tracking of funds and real time reporting of expenditure and receipts through treasury and bank interface.

• The line ministries/departments utilise this platform to monitor the utilisation of funds provided to the implementing agencies and state governments.

37. Answer (c) Waste Management

• Tesla's Black HOLE machines are to be used for **waste management in Ladakh**.**Henec option (c) is Correct.**

• To tackle the garbage crisis in Ladakh, Bengaluru-based Tesla Energy (an arm of the US-based Tesla Green) has come up with a 'Black hole' machine that works without fuel or electricity, and converts all waste, except glass & concrete material, into ash.

• Ladakh is suffering from a serious waste management crisis due to rising tourist footfall during peak season in June-August generating around 15-16 tonne of trash daily in a narrow arc covering the popular tourist haunts of Nubra valley in north-west Ladakh, Pangong-Tso and Tso-Moriri lakes in the east.

• Sending trash to the plains for disposal is economically and geographically unviable due to the rugged terrain and a short window when roads remain open hence BlackHOLE serve as solution to bridge that gap.

• The Black HOLE machine is small and can be installed anywhere in the city for garbage disposal without segregating dry and wet waste.

• It reduces the volume of garbage in the ratio of 1/300 – 1/400 and the residue can be used as a by-product for improving soil conditions and can act as a disinfectant, alter mixing with water.

• The BRO (Border Roads Organisation) has already agreed to buy the ash for building roads on the mountainside.

• As compared to the incinerators, Black HOLE requires no high temperatures and secondary combustion system as it is based on unique feature of Plasmic Decomposition

38. Answer (c) Bandipur National Park

• Presently, there is a ban on vehicle movement during night in the reserve forest areas. But Union Road Transport Ministry has recently asked the state government to lift the ban.

• The ministry has also mooted a flyover in the reserve area to avoid the consumption of fuel because of the ban

in vehicle movement on NH 766 during night.

• However, the state government has asserted that the ban will continue, citing the highest density of elephants in the reserve area.

• Bandipur National Park was formed from the forest areas of the then Venugopala wildlife park in 1941.

• Subsequently some adjacent reserve forest areas were added to the Bandipur reserve.

• This reserve was brought under Project Tiger in 1973.

• The Bandipur, Nagarahole, Wayanad, Mudumalai and Sathyamangalam Tiger

Landscape is spread across the states of Karnataka (Bandipur-Nagarahole), Tamil

Nadu (Mudumalai-Sathyamangalam) and Kerala (Wayanad).

• The park has a variety of biomes including dry deciduous forests, moist deciduous forests and scrublands.

• The park is surrounded by the Kabini River in the north and the Moyar River in the south while the Nugu River runs through the park.

39. Answer (d) Myanmar

• August 8 marks the 30th anniversary of the people's uprising in Myanmar. **Hence option (d) is correct.**

• The '8888' uprising (or the eighth day of August 1988) is one of Myanmar's most important historic days in the context of the pro-democracy movement (Picture shows the student flag with the 'Fighting Peacock' insignia, and used during the uprising).

• It was a series of nationwide protests, marches and civil unrest in Burma (Myanmar) that peaked in August 1988.

• Key events occurred on 8 August 1988 and therefore it is known as the 8888 Uprising.

• '8888' was a people's movement that challenged the then ruling Burma Socialist Programme Party's grip on political, economic and social affairs which led the country into extreme poverty.

• **The objective of '8888' was two-fold:**

1. To push for the transfer of power from the military to a civilian leadership and

2. A change in the political system from an authoritarian regime to a multi- party democracy.

• The protests and the bloody crackdown

• **Outcome:** gave rise to the National League for Democracy (NLD), a political party which paved the way for the current Myanmar State Counsellor, Aung San Suu Kyi's entry into politics and for the pro- democracy movement to continue.

40. Answer (b) only 2 is correct

• As per National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL) report, 22119 applications are pending as on 29.07.2018 for more than 6 months on VidyaLakshmi Portal.

• It is IT-based mechanism under the Pradhan Mantri Vidya Lakshmi Karyakram to **provide students a single window electronic platform for Scholarships and Educational Loans**.**Hence statement 1 is NOT correct.**

• It aims to enable all poor and middle class students to pursue higher education of their choice without any constraint of funds.

• It has been developed and being maintained by NSDL e-Governance Infrastructure Limited under the guidance of Department of Financial Services, Department of Higher Education and Indian Banks Association (IBA). **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

• Students can view, apply and track the education loan applications to banks anytime, anywhere by accessing the portal.

• The portal also provides linkages to National Scholarship Portal.

41. Answer (d) Disaster relief operation in flood-battered Kerala

• Navy launches 'Operation Madad' in flood-battered Kerala. **Hence option (d) is correct.**

• The operation 'Madad' has been launched by the Southern naval command at kochi.

• Nearly 54,000 people have been rendered homeless and 29 deaths have been reported so far from across the state which has been receiving incessant rains since past several days.

• It is for assisting the state administration of Kerala and undertaking disaster relief operations due to the unprecedented flooding experienced in many parts.

• Flooding in many parts is due to incessant rainfall and release of excess water from Idukki and other dams.

• In addition, the Naval Hospital, INHS Sanjivani has been deployed for rendering medical assistance.

• Naval helicopters are also deployed for ferrying divers, power tools, axes and relief material to the flooded areas to augment ongoing relief operations.

42. Answer (a) only 1 is correct

• Recently**,** Tamil Nadu Government has banned sale and possession of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) or e-Cigarettes in the state. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

• So far, Punjab, Karnataka, Kerala, Mizoram, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar already have prohibited manufacture, import, sale and distribution of ENDs or e-cigarettes. **Hence statement 2 is NOT correct.**

43. Answer (b) Ministry of Human Resource Development

• **Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has launched 'Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA)**' to systematically rank education institutions and universities primarily on innovation related indicators.

About ARIIA:

• ARIIA considers all major indicators which are commonly used globally to rank most innovative education institutions/ universities in the world. More than quantity, ARIIA will focus on quality of innovations and will try to measure the real impact created by these innovations nationally and internationally.

✓ **ARIIA will primarily focus on 5 main parameters:**
1) Budget Expenses and Revenue generated through Innovation and entrepreneurship development
2) Facilitating access to advance centres / facilities and entrepreneurial support system.
3) Idea to Entrepreneurship
4) Development of Innovation Ecosystems Supported through Teaching & Learning
5) Best innovative solutions Developed In-house for Improving Governance of Your Institution

44. Answer (c) both is correct

• It is an initiative launched by Global IT giant IBM in partnership with Indian IT companies. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

• The aim is to build global solutions for disaster management. It also aims to bring startup, academic and enterprise

developers together to respond to and recover from natural disasters. **Hence statement 2 is also correct.**

45. Answer (b) Ocean Development activities

• The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given its approval for the umbrella scheme** "**Ocean Services, Technology, Observations, Resources Modelling and Science (O-SMART)",** for implementation during the period from 2017-18 to 2019-20 at an overall cost of Rs.1623 crore.

✓ **Highlights of the scheme:**

• The **scheme encompasses a total of 16 sub-projects addressing ocean development activities** such as Services, Technology, Resources, Observations and Science.
•The services rendered under the O-SMART will provide economic benefits to a number of user communities in the coastal and ocean sectors, namely, fisheries, offshore industry, coastal states, Defence, Shipping, Ports etc.

46. Answer (b) 2 only is correct

• **First statement is wrong** The Spitzer Space Telescope (SST), formerly the **Space Infrared Telescope Facility (SIRTF), is an infrared space telescope launched in 2003** (**NOT RECENTLY)**. It is the **fourth and final of the NASA Great Observatories program.**

• **It was in news because** NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope, the youngest member of the "Great Observatory" programme, has completed 15 years in space.

• **Spitzer's infrared eyes** also allows astronomers see cooler objects in space, like failed stars (brown dwarfs), extrasolar planets, giant molecular clouds, and organic molecules that may hold the secret to life on other planets.

47. Answer (b) European Union's Research and Innovation programme.

✓ **Horizon 2020 is the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme ever with nearly €80 billion of funding available over 7 years (2014 to 2020)** – in addition to the private investment that this money will attract. It promises more breakthroughs, discoveries and world-firsts by taking great ideas from the lab to the market.

• It was in news because the **European Union and India will collaborate in research and innovation for developing a next generation influenza vaccine to protect people worldwide.** The **EU is funding this under its programme for research and innovation 'Horizon 2020'.**

• The EU and the Indian government's Department of Biotechnology have committed 15 million Euros each to fund this joint project.
The aim is to advance the efficacy, safety, duration of immunity, and reactivity against an increased breadth of influenza strains. The joint effort also aims to develop cost-effective and affordable influenza vaccine rapidly without compromising quality.

✓ **Eligibility:**

• The projects require minimum three applicants from Europe (three different EU member states) or countries associated to the EU programme Horizon 20202) and minimum three applicants from India.
• The projects are also 'Open to the World' and thus applicants from other countries can join the EU-India consortia.

48. Answer (b) 2 only is correct

• **First statement is wrong because** the **fourth edition of Asian electoral stakeholder's forum (AESF-IV) was held in Sri Lanka** to **discuss the state of elections and democracy in the region**. It was **jointly organised by Election Commission of Sri Lanka and Asian network for free elections (ANFREL).**

• The **first AESF was held in Thailand** in 2012 and had endorsed Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections.

✓ **Key facts:**

•This was for first time AESF was held in South Asia.
•Theme: 'Advancing Election Transparency and Integrity: Promoting and Defending Democracy Together'.

✓**The key objectives of AESF-IV are:**

•To provide a venue for Election Management Bodies (EMBs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and other stakeholders to share and learn about the present electoral challenges as well as best practices in the region.
•To develop and endorse the "Colombo Strategy to Promote and Defend Electoral Democracy in Asia".
•To institutionalize capacity building efforts in making elections more meaningful and credible through cooperation among stakeholders.
•To promote inclusiveness in elections by paying special attention to sectoral cooperation.

✓**About AESF:**

•The AESF is the largest gathering of its kind, and is sustained through a strong cooperation between the civil society and election commissions.
•The Forum will cover a wide array of

crucial election issues like the current state of democracy in Asia, the common electoral challenges in the region, and various good practices employed to make elections better.
•It provides opportunity for Asian election commissions, election observers, non-government organizations (NGOs) and interstate bodies to gather and discuss state of elections and democracy in the region. It also provides platform for institutionalizing capacity building efforts to pave the way for more meaningful and credible election through cooperation among stakeholders.

49. Answer (d) Hyperinflation

✓What is the Venezuela crisis?

•**Hyperinflation is the biggest problem faced by Venezuela.** The inflation rate there is expected to reach a stunning one million per cent this year, putting it on par with the crises of Zimbabwe in the 2000s and Germany in the 1920s, according to the International Monetary Fund. The government claims that the country is the victim of an "economic war" and that the major issues are due to opposition "plots" and American sanctions.

✓What caused this increase?

• The plummeting oil prices since 2014 is one of the main reasons why Venezuela's currency has weakened sharply. The country, which has rich oil reserves largely depended on it for its revenue. But when the oil price dropped drastically in 2014, Venezuela which received 96 per cent of its revenue from the oil exports, suffered a shortage of foreign currency. This made import of basic essentials like food and medicines difficult.

50. Answer (b) Yamuna

• **Key facts:**

•Project Will Generate 300 MW of Power Create 33,780 Hectare Irrigation Potential and 78.83 MCM Water Availability.
•Uttarakhand Will Bear the Cost of Power Component, Get the Total Benefit of Power Generation.
•Centre will Fund 90% of Irrigation Component, the Six States to the Fund Remaining 10% and Share Water Proportionately.

✓Lakhwar Multi- Purpose Project:

•**Lakhwar Project is a multipurpose scheme, primarily a peaking power station, on river Yamuna in the district**

of Dehradun in Uttarakhand.

•The **scheme envisages construction of 204 m high concrete dam on river Yamuna near Lohari village.** The Multipurpose scheme also envisages construction of Vyasi HEP (2×60 MW) (Hathiari power station) downstream of Lakhwar HEP.

•The scheme also includes construction of a barrage at Katapathar about 3 Km downstream of Hathiari power station (Vyasi HEP) on river Yamuna.

✓**Beneficiary States:**

Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan and Delhi are the six Upper Yamuna Basin states. Upper Yamuna refers to the stretch of River Yamuna from its origin to the Okhla Barrage in Delhi.

51. Answer (c) both is correct

• **<u>It was in news because</u>** the **government has extended the scope of Prime Minister's Research Fellows Scheme.** The decision was made after Government failed to find adequate number of candidates for PMRF this year. Only 135 fellowships were finally offered against 1,000 positions.

Changes introduced:

• **Prime Minister's Research Fellows (PMRF) Scheme will now be open to all potential researchers from 2019** and not limited to candidates from IISc, IITs, NITs, IIEST and IISERs.

• The **Prime Minister's Research Fellowship (PMRF) scheme is aimed at attracting the talent pool of the country to doctoral (Ph.D.) programs of Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institute of Science (IISc) for carrying out research in cutting edge science and technology domains, with focus on national priorities.**

Eligibility

✓ The applicants for the PMRF should:

• have completed or be pursuing the final year of four (or five) year undergraduate or five year integrated M.Tech or five year integrated M.Sc. or five year undergraduate-postgraduate dual degree programs in Science and Technology streams from IIEST/IISc/IITs/NITs/IISERs and centrally funded IIITs;

• have secured at least CGPA/CPI of 8.0 (in scale of 10.0). For applicants in five year integrated or dual degree programs if separate CGPAs/CPIs are awarded for UG and PG parts of the program then the CGPA/CPI of UG part (first four year) will be considered.

• have completed the required

academic qualification in the last five years.

• A **research grant of Rs.2.00 lakh per year will be provided to each of the Fellows for a period of 5 years to** cover their academic contingency expenses and for foreign/national travel expenses.

52. Answer (a) 1 only

• Second statement is wrong because flash flood is a rapid flooding of low-lying areas (NOT SLOW): washes, rivers, dry lakes and basins. It may be caused by heavy rain associated with a severe thunderstorm, hurricane, tropical storm, or meltwater from ice or snow flowing over ice sheets or snowfields. Flash floods may occur after the collapse of a natural ice or debris dam, or a human structure such as a man-made dam. Flash floods are distinguished from regular floods by having a timescale of less than six hours.

•**It was in news because** India has been designated as a nodal centre for preparing flash-flood forecasts by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). That means **India will have to develop a customised model that can issue advance warning of floods in Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand**.

✓ **Need for early warning:**

• Like India, several southeast Asian countries depend on the monsoon and are prone to its vagaries. The WMO says flash floods account for 85% of flooding incidents across the world, causing some 5,000 deaths each year.
• The proposed model would provide forecasts by computing the likelihood of rainfall and the soil moisture levels to warn of possible floods.

•The **World Meteorological Organization (WMO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations** dedicated to meteorology (weather), climatology (climate), operational hydrology (water) and other related geophysical sciences such as oceanography and atmospheric chemistry.

53. Answer (C) only 2 is correct

• **First Statement is wrong because** the 2018 BRICS summit, the tenth such annual summit, is being held in **South Africa.**

• **Third statement is wrong because** Xiamen Declaration is related to 9th BRICS summit.

• **Theme**: "BRICS in Africa: Collaboration for Inclusive Growth and Shared

ONYIAS

Prosperity in the 4th Industrial Revolution".

✓ The new areas of BRICS cooperation as proposed by South Africa, are as follows:

• **Establishment of a Working Group on Peacekeeping.**

• **Establishment of a Vaccine Research Centre for Collaboration with BRICS vaccine** innovation and development partners – this is intended to be a physical research centre focused on research and development and vaccine innovation.

• **Establishment of a BRICS Gender and Women's Forum** – intended as a dedicated track for gender and women's issues, given the economic benefit to be derived from the socio-economic empowerment of women, particularly in developing countries.

• **Establishment of a BRICS Tourism Track of Cooperation.**

✓ BRICS is an acronym for the grouping of the world's leading emerging economies, namely Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

✓**Chairship**: The Chairship of the forum is rotated annually among the members, in accordance with the acronym B-R-I-C-S.

✓The **First BRIC Summit was held in June 2009 in Yekaterinburg, Russia.**

✓ The **Ninth BRICS Summit was held in Xiamen, China** under the theme "**BRICS: Stronger Partnership for a Brighter Future".** The leaders built on achievements already made with a share vision for future development of BRICS, discussed international and regional issues of common concern and adopted the **Xiamen Declaration.**

54. Answer (c) Both 1 and 2 is correct

• **It was in news because** West Bengal government has announced that **there would not be any ceiling for a family's annual earnings to be a beneficiary under the UN award winning Kanyashree scheme.** Till now, **girls who belong to families with annual family income not more than Rs 1.20 lakh is entitled to get the benefits.**

✓**About Kanyashree scheme:**

• Kanyashree is a **conditional cash transfer scheme aiming at improving the status and well-being of the girl child by incentivising schooling of teenage girls and delaying their marriages until the age of 18**. It received the United Nations Public Service Award last year.

• The UN Public Service Awards are given by the world body to institutions

from across the world for their innovation and excellence in providing public services.

• It highlights the pivotal role of public services in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
• The Awards aim at discovering innovations in governance; reward excellence in the public sector; motivate public servants to further promote innovation; enhance professionalism in the public service; raise the image of public service; enhance trust in government; and collect and disseminate successful practices for possible replication.

55. Answer (a) 1 only

• **Second statement is wrong** because it will provide Rs. 5 lakh per family per annum for all Secondary and Tertiary Cashless Health Care Assistance and not for primary healthcare assistance.

• Odisha government has launched Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana, on the occasion of the 72nd Independence Day.

• Under this scheme, Women beneficiaries can get health cover upto Rs. 7 lakh.
• This scheme will benefit 3.5 crore people (70 lakh families) at any govt. and private empanelled hospitals.

•All beneficiaries currently enrolled under the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY), as well as other low-income families, are covered under the BSKY.

56. Answer (c) both is correct

• **It was in news because**, the Indian government has handed over a cheque amounting Rs 33 crore to the Nepal Government for construction of a Postal Highway.

✓ **About the Postal Highway project:**

• Postal Highway also called Hulaki Rajmarg runs across the **Terai region of Nepa**l, from **Bhadrapur in the east** to **Dodhara in the west**, cutting across the entire width of the country.
• It is the **oldest highway in Nepal** constructed by Juddha Shumsher Jung Bahadur Rana & Padma Shumsher Jung Bahadur Rana to **aid transportation and facilitate postal services throughout the nation.**

57. Answer (a) United States, Russia and China

•Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) unveiled details of its first indigenous human space mission dubbed as Gaganyaan to be launched in 2022.

•The mission was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his 72nd Independence Day speech. Under it, three Indian astronauts (Gaganyatris) will be taken to space on board Gaganyaan spacecraft by 2022.

• This will be the first human space mission to be indigenously developed by ISRO. **If successful, India will become fourth nation in the world to send astronaut into space after US, Russia and China....**

58. Answer (b) 2 only

• **First statement is wrong because**, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) have launched RUCO (Repurpose Used Cooking Oil), an **initiative that will enable collection and conversion of used cooking oil to bio-diesel.**

• Under this initiative**, 64 companies at 101 locations have been identified to enable collection of used cooking oil.** For instance: McDonald's has already started converting used cooking oil to biodiesel from 100 outlets in Mumbai and Pune.
• FSSAI wants businesses using more than 100 litres of oil for frying, to maintain a stock register and ensure that UCO is handed over to only register collecting agencies.

• FSSAI believes India has the potential to recover 220 crore litres of used cooking oil for the production of biodiesel by 2022 through a co-ordinated action.

• According to FSSAI regulations, the **maximum permissible limits for Total Polar Compounds (TPC) have been set at 25%, beyond which the cooking oil is unsafe for consumption.**

✓ what is Total Polar Compounds (TPC)?
• In many countries, **TPC is used to measure the quality of oil.** The **level of TPC increases every time oil is re-heated**. Some of the studies show that **TPC accumulation in oil without food is slower than that in oil frying with food**.

• **Higher level of TPC in cooking oil leads to health issues** like **hypertension, atherosclerosis, Alzheimer's disease and liver disease.**

59. Answer (d) all are correct

•**It was in news because** the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has said the incident of cyber-attack in Pune-based Cosmos Cooperative Bank, that has caused an over ₹90-crore loss, is due to a malware attack on the bank's system.

✓ About NPCI

•National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is an umbrella organisation for operating retail payments and settlement systems in India.

• Founded in 2008, NPCI is a not-for-profit organisation registered under section 8 of the Companies Act 2013.

• The organisation is owned by a consortium of major banks, and has been promoted by the country's central bank, the Reserve Bank of India.

• Presently, **there are ten core promoter banks** (State Bank of India, Punjab National Bank, Canara Bank, Bank of Baroda, and Union Bank of India, Bank of India, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, Citibank and HSBC).

60. Answer (a) 1 only

•**Second statement is wrong because,** it is **organized by the International Federation of Philosophical Societies (FISP)** in collaboration with one of its member societies. (NOT UNESCO) It was first organized in 1900.

• Recently, 24th World Congress of Philosophy held in Beijing, China.
✓Aims of the 2018 Congress include an emphasis on exploring dimensions of the human and inquiring into the challenges facing humanity:

• To globalize philosophical investigations to encompass the diverse forms of philosophizing by past and present thinkers across cultures, with special attention to critical reflections on philosophy itself and the tasks and functions of philosophy in the contemporary world.
• To open the philosophical area to enable philosophers to address emerging global issues through fruitful interactions with other disciplines in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, with other activities in economic, social, political, and religious spheres, as well as with diverse cultures and traditions.
• To encourage philosophical reflections to become public discourses on recurrent human concerns, such as ecology, justice, and peace.

61. Answer (c) Economist Intelligence Unit

• The liveability index quantifies the challenges that might be presented to an individual's lifestyle in 140 cities worldwide, and assesses which locations provide the best living conditions.

✓ PARAMETERS OF THE GLOBAL LIVEABILITY INDEX:
The list ranks 140 cities on a range of factors, including:
•Political and social stability.
•Crime

OnlyIAS

•Education
•Access to healthcare.

✓**The survey rates cities worldwide based on 30 qualitative and quantitative criteria, which fall into five general categories:**
1)Stability
2)Health care
3)Culture and environment.
4)Education
5)Infrastructure

As per Economist Intelligence Unit's (EIU) Global Liveability Index, 2018, the **top 10 cities to live in the world are:**
1)Vienna
2)Melbourne
3)Osaka
4)Calgary
5)Sydney
6)Vancouver
7)Tokya
8)Toronto
9)Copenhagen
10)Adelaide

EIU's Global Liveability Index, 2018, puts the following cities at the bottom of the list:
•Senegal's Dakar at 131.
•Algeria's Algiers at 132.
•Cameroon's Douala at 133.
•Libya's Tripoli at 134.
•Zimbabwe's Harare at 135.
•Papua New Guinea's Port Moresby at 136.
•Karachi at 137.
•Nigeria's Lagos at 138.
•Dhaka at 139.
•Damascus at 140.

✓ **For India, only New Delhi and Mumbai could make it to the list with:**
•New Delhi at 112th position.
•Mumbai at 117th position.

62. Answer (d) all are correct

• **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has launched UPI 2.0**, an upgraded and renewed version of Unified Payments Interface (UPI).

✓ **Key features of UPI 2.0**

1. Linking of overdraft account: In addition to current and savings accounts, customers can link their overdraft account to UPI. Customers will be able to transact instantly and all benefits associated with overdraft account shall be made available to the users. UPI 2.0 will serve as an additional digital channel to access the overdraft account.

2. One-time mandate: UPI mandate could be used in a scenario where money is to be transferred later by providing commitment at present. UPI

2.0 mandates are created with one-time block functionality for transactions. Customers can pre-authorise a transaction and pay at a later date. It works seamlessly for merchants as well as for individual users. Mandates can be created and executed instantly. On the date of actual purchase, the amount will be deducted and received by the merchant/individual user.

3. Invoice in the inbox: According to NPCI, this feature is designed for customers to check the invoice sent by merchant prior to making payment. It will help customers to view and verify the credentials and check whether it has come from the right merchant or not. Customers can pay after verifying the amount and other important details mentioned in the invoice.

4) Signed intent and QR: This feature is designed for customers to check the authenticity of merchants while scanning QR or quick response code. It notifies the user with information to ascertain whether the merchant is a verified UPI merchant or not. This provides an additional security. Customers will be informed in case the receiver is not secured by way of notifications.

•UPI 2.0 member banks as on date are State Bank of India (SBI), HDFC Bank, Axis Bank, ICICI Bank, IDBI Bank, RBL Bank, YES Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, IndusInd Bank, Federal Bank and HSBC.

✓ **About UPI**

• The **Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is a system developed by the NPCI** and the **RBI** to **aid instant transfer of money using a cashless system**.

• Using UPI services, one just requires a smartphone and a banking app to send and receive money instantly or to pay a merchant for retail purchase. In the long run, UPI is likely to replace the current NEFT, RTGS, and IMPS systems as they exist today.

✓ **The UPI ecosystem functions with three key players:**

• Payment service providers (PSPs) to provide the interface to the payer and the payee. Unlike wallets, the payer and the payee can use two different PSPs.
• Banks to provide the underlying accounts. In some cases, the bank and the PSP may be the same.
• NPCI to act as the central switch by ensuring VPA resolution, effecting credit and debit transactions through IMPS.

63. Answer (c) 1&2 only

• Third statement is wrong because INI holds conference once in every **three** years.

(NOT TEN Years)

•It was in news because Indian scientist Nandula Raghuram has been elected as the Chair of the International Nitrogen Initiative (INI), a global policy making initiative. He is the first Indian and Asian to be elected to the Chair of INI.

✓About International Nitrogen Initiative:

• The International Nitrogen Initiative (INI) is an international program, set up in 2003 under sponsorship of the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE) and from the International Geosphere-Biosphere Program (IGBP).

• The initiative aims to optimise nitrogen's beneficial role in sustainable food production and minimize nitrogen's negative effects on human health.
• INI is coordinated by a Steering Committee, led by a chair and six regional centre directors representing, Africa, Europe, Latin America, North America, South Asia and East Asia.
• The INI holds a conference once in every three years, inviting members of the international nitrogen community to meet up and discuss ideas and exchange knowledge on nitrogen issues.
• The program is currently a sustained partner of Future Earth, an international organisation that works to accelerate transformations to global sustainability through research and innovation.

✓Nitrogen:

•Nitrogen is one of the five major chemical elements that are necessary for life. While **nitrogen is the most abundant of these**, **more than 99% of it occurs as molecular nitrogen, or N2**, which **cannot be used by most organisms**. This is **because breaking the triple bond holding the two nitrogen atoms together requires a large amount of energy**, which can be **mustered only through high-temperature processes** or by a **small number of nitrogen-fixing microbes.**

64. Answer (d) All of the above

• **It was in news because** Continuing its efforts to get 'millets' a global recognition for its promotion among consumers, **India has written to Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations proposing declaration of the upcoming year as "International Year of Millets".**

✓ **Efforts by government to promote millets:**

•In order to promote 'millets', **India had on its part notified these climate resilient crops as "Nutri-Cereals**" and **allowed its inclusion in the Public Distribution System** (PDS) for improving nutritional support in April.
• Recognising **millets' anti-diabetic properties**, the notification called it a "**powerhouse of nutrients**" and **identified several varieties of millets for promotion.**

• The **millets in the category of "Nutri-Cereals**" include **Sorghum (Jowar), Pearl Millet (Bajra), Finger Millet (Ragi), Foxtail Millet (Kangani/Kakun) and Buckwheat (Kuttu) among others.**
• Besides, the government had in July substantially **hiked the minimum support price (MSP) of millets** so that more and more farmers may opt for cultivation of these less water consuming crops.

✓ Benefits of Millets:

An important staple cereal crop for millions of small holder dryland farmers across sub-saharan Africa and Asia, millets offer nutrition, resilience, income and livelihood for farmers even in difficult times.

• They have **multiple untapped uses** such as **food, feed, fodder, biofuels and brewing**. Therefore, **millets are Smart Food as they are Good for You, Good for the Farmer and Good for the Planet.**

• **Nutritionally superior to wheat & rice** owing to their higher levels of protein with more balanced amino acid profile, crude fiber & minerals such as Iron, Zinc, and Phosphorous, millets can provide nutritional security and act as a shield against nutritional deficiency, especially among children and women.

• The anaemia (iron deficiency), B-complex vitamin deficiency, pellagra (niacin deficiency) can be effectively tackled with intake of less expensive but nutritionally rich food grains like millets.

• Millets can also help tackle health challenges such as obesity, diabetes and lifestyle problems as they are **gluten free, have a low glycemic index** and are high in dietary fibre and antioxidants.

• Adapted to low or no purchased inputs and to harsh environment of the semi-arid tropics, they are the **backbone for dry land agriculture.**

• **Photo-insensitive & resilient to climate change**, millets are hardy, resilient crops that have a low carbon

and water footprint, can **withstand high temperatures and grow on poor soils with little or no external inputs.** In times of climate change they are often the last crop standing and, thus, are a good risk management strategy for resource-poor marginal farmers.

65. Answer (a) 1 only

• Second statement is wrong because LIGO-India project is **piloted by Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and Department of Science and Technology (DST).**

• **It was in news because** The Environment Ministry has allowed scientists to test the suitability of land in Maharashtra's Hingoli district to host the India wing of the ambitious Laser Interferometer Gravitational Wave Observatory (LIGO) project.

• The LIGO (Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory) is a massive observatory for detecting cosmic gravitational waves and for carrying out experiments. The objective is to use gravitational-wave observations in astronomical studies.
• The project operates three gravitational-wave (GW) detectors. Two are at Hanford in the state of Washington, north-western US, and one is at Livingston in Louisiana, south-eastern US. The proposed LIGO India project aims to move one advanced LIGO detector from Hanford to India.

• The **LIGO-India project will be jointly coordinated and executed by three Indian research institutions:** the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA), Pune and Department of Atomic Energy organisations: Institute for Plasma Research (IPR), Gandhinagar and the Raja Ramanna Centre for Advanced Technology (RRCAT), Indore.

✓ **What is gravitational waves?**

•Gravitational waves are disturbances in the curvature (fabric) of spacetime, generated by accelerated masses that propagate as waves outward from their source at the speed of light. They were proposed by Henri Poincare in 1905 and subsequently predicted in 1916 by Albert Einstein on the basis of his general theory of relativity. Gravitational waves transport energy as gravitational radiation, a form of radiant energy similar to electromagnetic radiation.

66. Answer (d) All of the above

• **Salt crocodiles were in news because** the **Odisha government is setting up a world-class interpretation centre at**

Dangamal near Bhitarkanika National Park to showcase its **efforts in protecting crocodiles and preserving its rich mangrove diversity**. The centre will be developed both as a tourist attraction and a place for students to learn about the environment.
•The **project**, which has been **approved under the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project**, will be taken up at an estimated cost of ₹3 crore.

• **Bhitarkanika park is famous** for its green mangroves, migratory birds, turtles, **estuarine crocodiles** and countless creeks. It is **said to house 70% of the country's estuarine or saltwater crocodiles**, **conservation of which was started way back in 1975.**

✓ **'BAULA' PROJECT AT DANGAMAL:**

• 'Baula' is the Oriya term for Saltwater Crocodile. At Dangmal in Bhitarkanika sanctuary, salt-water crocodile eggs have been collected locally; and young crocodiles have been released in the creeks and the estuaries; and more than 2200 crocodiles have been released in phases since 1977.
•This operation has been reasonably successful and the crocodile population in the Bhitarkanika river system has gradually been built up.

✓ **saltwater crocodile**

•The saltwater crocodile, also known as the estuarine crocodile, Indo-Pacific crocodile, marine crocodile, sea crocodile or informally as saltie, is the **largest of all living reptiles**, as well as the **largest riparian predator in the world.**

• The saltwater crocodile is a large and **opportunistic hypercarnivorous apex predator.**

• Currently, the species is listed in CITES as follows:

- Appendix I (prohibiting all commercial trade in the species or its byproducts): All wild populations except for those of Australia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea;
- Appendix II (commercial trade allowed with export permit; import permits may or may not be required depending on the laws of the importing country): Australia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea wild populations, plus all worldwide populations bred in captivity for commercial purposes.

67. Answer (c) both 1 and 2

• 11th World Hindi Conference is being held at Mauritius.
• **Theme**: "Vaishvik Hindi Aur Bharatiy Sanskriti".
• The event, **held once in three years, is dedicated to Hindi language**. It sees

participation from Hindi scholars, writers and laureates from different parts of the world who contribute to the language.

✓**Key facts for Prelims:**

• The **decision to organize the 11th edition of the Conference in Mauritius was taken at the 10th World Hindi Conference held in Bhopal, India in September 2015.**

• The **first World Hindi Conference was held in 1975 in Nagpur**, India. Since then, ten such Conferences have been held in different parts of the world.

• The **MEA has also set up the World Hindi Secretariat in Mauritius**. The main objective of the WHS is to promote Hindi as an international language and further its cause for recognition at the United Nations as an Official Language.

68. Answer (a) NABARD

•The survey covered a sample of 1.88 lakh people from 40,327 rural households. **Only 48% of these are defined as agricultural households**, which **have at least one member self-employed in agriculture and which received more than ₹5,000 as value of produce from agricultural activities** over the past year, whether they possessed any land or not.

69. Answer (a) 1 only

•**Second statement is wrong because** it is **issued by registered foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) to overseas investors** who wish to be part of the Indian stock market without registering themselves directly.

• I**t was in news because Investments through participatory notes into Indian capital markets have plunged to over nine-year low of Rs 80,341 crore till July-end amid stringent norms put in place by the watchdog Sebi to check misuse of these instruments.**

• P-notes are used by overseas market participants that don't want to get registered as FIIs. P-notes are not issued in India, rather these are issued by an India registered FII to other overseas investors. The FII will be the entity to initiate a transaction in our stock markets, which could be on behalf of foreign clients. P-notes are then issued by the FII to the client, underlining that the securities are held on behalf of the client albeit in the name of the FII. The P-note holder is entitled to all the dividends, capital gains and other payouts on the underlying securities. FIIs have to periodically report to Sebi on P-note issuance without the need to name the final beneficiary.

70. Answer (d) neither 1 nor 2

• **First statement is wrong because** the Hologram-based sticker of **light-blue colour will be used for petrol and CNG-run vehicles.(NOT for diesel-driven vehicles)**

• **Second statement is wrong because** Sticker of **orange colour will be used for diesel-driven vehicles. (NOT for petrol and CNG-run vehicles)**

71. Answer (b) 1&2 only

•**Third statement is wrong because** a mentally ill person shall have the **right to choose the way of treatment** and **can nominate a person who can take decision on their behalf.**

• **It was in news because** Insurance regulator IRDAI has issued circular directing insurers to cover mental illness, which has reached serious proportions in the country.

✓ **What's the issue?**

• The Mental Healthcare Act, 2017 — which came into force from May 29 — has made it mandatory to provide "for medical insurance for treatment of mental illness on the same basis as is available for treatment of physical illness".

• But to date, none of India's 33 insurers has introduced a product that covers ailments such as depression, schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder, even though such covers are commonplace in many countries.

✓ **Important Features of the Bill**

• Rights of persons with mental illness: Every person have the right to access mental health care by both public and private services. Right to access of mental health care includes availability, affordability and accessibility.
• Advance Directive: A mentally ill person shall have the right to choose the way of treatment and can nominate a person who can take decision on their behalf.
• Central and State Mental Health Authority:Authority has the responsibility to
To maintain register of all mental health establishments
To develop quality service
To train law enforcement officials
To receive complains
To advise the govt. on the matters relating to mental health.
• Mental Health Review Commission and Board: It will be quasi-judicial body that will review the use and the procedure for making advance directives and the advice the government on protection of the rights of mentally ill persons.
• Decriminalizing suicide and prohibiting electro-convulsive therapy: A person

attempting suicide is given mental treatment at that particular time and it is not considered as a crime under Indian Penal Code.

• Electro-convulsive therapy is allowed with the use of muscle relaxants and anesthesia which is prohibited for minors.
Insurance: Bill will facilitate insurance facility for both medical insurance as well as physical illness.

72. Answer (c) Gold

• **These are a new type of gold in the form of very small crystals** developed by researchers from Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bengaluru.
• The microcystallites were synthesised by decomposing an organic complex containing gold and other ions under controlled conditions.
• The **microcrystal gold has been found to be nobler than gold** — it do not dissolve in mercury and Aqua regia (a mixture of nitric acid and hydrochloric acid), and showed the least interaction with copper.
• **Microcystallites are also more stable than the normal gold.**

73. Answer (a) Telangana

•The vehicles will be parked at 24 locations with Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) DRF staff and they will reach the emergency spots in no time.
•The main aim to start this DRF is that a state should have its own Disaster force.
•DRF personnel have been trained in tackling of flooding, tree falls, structural collapses and any other site of normal emergencies.
•DRF has been first brought on to the ground with 120 personal with 8 specialised vehicles and other equipment's which are required.

74. (b) Storing data on any device that is physically present within the borders of a specific country.

• It was recently in news because US technology giants plan to intensify lobbying efforts against stringent Indian data localisation requirements, which they say will undermine their growth ambitions in India.

✓ **What does Data Localization mean?**
• **Data localization is the act of storing data on any device that is physically present within the borders of a specific country where the data was generated**. Free flow of digital data, especially data which could impact government operations or operations in a region, is restricted by some governments. Many attempt to protect and promote security

across borders, and therefore encourage data localization.

✓ **Policy goals:**

• Goals set in the Draft National Digital Communications Policy 2018, along with various government notifications and guidelines such as Reserve Bank of India's notification on Payment Data Storage 2018, and the Guidelines for Government Departments for Contractual Terms related to Cloud Storage 2017, show signs of data localisation.

• The rationale behind such mandates has been attributed to various factors, such as: securing citizen's data, data privacy, data sovereignty, national security, and economic development of the country. The extensive data collection by technology companies, due to their unfettered access and control of user data, has allowed them to freely process and monetise Indian users' data outside the country.

75. Answer (c) Anti-Tank Guided Missile.

• It is **indigenously developed Helicopter launched Anti-Tank Guided Missile.**

• The Missile is guided by an Infrared Imaging Seeker (IIR) operating in the Lock on Before Launch mode. It is one of the most advanced Anti-Tank Weapons in the world.

• It was in news because, it was successfully flight tested from Army Helicopter recently.

• HeliNa, (**Helicopter-launched Nag**) with a range of 7–8 km, launched from twin-tube stub wing-mounted launchers on board the armed HAL Dhruv and HAL Light Combat Helicopter produced by state-owned Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL).

• It will be structurally different from the Nag.

✓ **what is NAG?**

•The Nag missile is an **Indian third generation "fire-and-forget" anti-tank guided missile**. It is an **all-weather, top attack missile with a range of 3 to 7 km**.

• It is **being developed by India's Defence Research and Development Organisation** (DRDO) under the **Integrated Guided Missile Development Program** and is **manufactured by Bharat Dynamics Limited.**

76. **Answer (a) Mauritius**

• **Panini Language Laboratory' has been set up at Mahatma Gandhi Institute (MGI) in Mauritius.**

• The **lab, gifted by the Indian government, will help MGI in teaching Indian languages in Mauritius**. It **aims**

onIAS

to promote reading and writing Hindi amongst young generation and its further development. It will **serve as medium to generate more interest in learning Hindi amongst youngsters thereby strengthening language.**

77. Answer (b) 2, 3 and 4 only

• **First match is not correct** because **Hand in Hand exercise is between India and China.**

(NOT France)

• Exercise Maitree 2018 was held in Thailand. The Exercise Maitree is an annual event designed to strengthen the partnership between Royal Thai Army and Indian Army.

• The **first joint military exercise named "Dharma Guardian" between India and Japan held at the Army's Counter-Insurgency Warfare School at Vairengte (Mizoram**).The exercise is aimed at developing mutual understanding and respect between militaries of both countries, as also facilitate in tracking worldwide phenomenon of terrorism.

78. Answer (d) All of the above

•With the **rupee recently weakening past ₹70 to a dollar and hovering about that level since, concerns over the impact of the devaluation on economic indicators are intensifying.**

✓Why Indian Rupee is falling against the US Dollar?

• Turkish currency turmoil: The Indian currency had plunged by Rs 1.08, or 1.57 per cent, to a record low of 69.91 against the US currency amid fears that Turkish currency turmoil could turn out into global financial crisis.

• The Spike in oil prices has pulled down the rupee, by pushing up dollar demand.

• Global Trade war fears triggered by the US and China's retaliatory import tariffs have also weakened the Rupee.

• The Chinese yuan has fallen sharply in the last few sessions. This also has triggered a dollar flight from many emerging economies. The Spurt in dollar outflow has pulled down most Asian currencies, including the rupee.

How it affects inflation?

•With rupee falling, **country's imports become more expensive** and **exports cheaper**. The reason is simple. It **takes more rupees to pay for the same quantum of imports** and **fewer dollars for a buyer to pay for the same quantity of export**s.

•**More expensive imports are likely to drive inflation upward**, especially in India where input products constitute a large part of our imports. In addition, a **depreciating rupee also impacts the oil**

import bill since it costs more rupees per barrel of oil, which plays its own part in pushing inflation up.

✓What happens to GDP growth?

•On the one hand, costlier inputs and the subsequent increase in the prices of finished goods should have a positive impact on GDP. But the consequent decrease in demand due to higher prices could nullify this.

•A depreciating rupee certainly affects the exports and imports, since exports are likely to receive a boost while imports could flag somewhat. It remains to be seen what impact a reduction in household consumption would have on demand, especially when the festive season is nearing.

✓How does it affect individuals?

•A **depreciating rupee means higher prices of goods and services, costlier petrol and trips abroad turning more expensive**. On the flip side, the **domestic tourism could grow as more tourists visit India since their currency now buys more here**. In the medium term, **export-oriented industries may also create more jobs because export becomes cheaper when Rupee weakens.**

79. Answer (a) an asteroid

• It was in news because the **OSIRIS-REx spacecraft has begun its final approach toward the big near-Earth asteroid Bennu.**

✓ About the mission:
• OSIRIS-Rex stands for Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification, Security-Regolith Explorer.

•It is a **NASA asteroid study and sample-return mission.**The **mission's main goal is to obtain a sample of at least 60 grams (2.1 oz) from Bennu**, a **carbonaceous near-Earth asteroid**, and return the sample to Earth for a detailed analysis.

• OSIRIS-REx is the third mission in NASA's New Frontiers program, which **previously sent the New Horizons spacecraft zooming by Pluto and the Juno spacecraft into orbit around Jupiter.**

80. Answer (c) Maldives

• The **world's largest 3-D printed reef has been submerged at Summer Island Maldives**, in what is hoped could be a **new technology-driven method to help coral reefs survive a warming climate.**

• The **artificial reef, assembled with hundreds of ceramic and concrete**

modules, was **submerged at Summer Island's 'Blue Lagoon'** — a **sandy part of the lagoon, where the resort hopes to create a new coral reef ecosystem.**

81. Answer (c) both 1 and 2

• **It was in news because** a high-level meeting was recently convened to discuss recommendations on ways to curb "sexual violence" videos involving women and children.

✓ **Outcomes of the meeting:**

• It was decided in the meeting that the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) would be the designated nodal agency for monitoring the complaints received on a government portal that records child pornography and sexual violence videos.**

• The **NCRB would coordinate with service providers such as Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp and ask them to block malicious videos and contents.**

✓ **Impact:**

• **NCRB is only a crime record agency**. Therefore, a **government notification has been issued under the Information Technology Act, 2000 to enable it to take action against such videos.** Now, whenever such incidents are reported, it **can write to service providers and ask them to block the content.**

✓ **About NCRB:**

• NCRB is the Nodal Agency for authentic source of Data on crime, accidents, suicides, and prisons for policy matters and research.

• It was set-up in 1986 to function as a repository of information on crime and criminals so as to assist the investigators in linking crime to the perpetrators.

• It was set up based on the recommendations of the National Police Commission (1977-1981) and the MHA's Task force (1985).

• It was set up by merging the Directorate of Coordination and Police Computer (DCPC), Inter State Criminals Data Branch of CBI, Central Finger Print Bureau of CBI, and Statistical Branch of BPR&D.

82. Answer (a) 1 only

•**Second statement is wrong because** even if NOTA gets more than 50% votes or maximum number of votes in Lok Sabha Elections still it will not affect the results of election. The Election Commission also clarified that even though votes cast as NOTA are counted, they are considered as invalid votes so they will not change the outcome of the election process. They are not taken into account for calculating the total valid votes and will not be considered for determining the forfeiture of deposit.

• It was in news because the **Supreme Court has overruled an Election Commission notification,** saying that **NOTA (None Of The Above) option cannot be allowed in Rajya Sabha elections.**

✓ **Why SC scrapped the use of NOTA in Rajya Saba elections?**

• As per the court, the NOTA option is meant only for universal adult suffrage and direct elections and not polls held by the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote as done in the Rajya Sabha.

• NOTA in indirect elections, such as in the Rajya Sabha, would lead to horse-trading, corruption and use of extra constitutional methods to defeat a party candidate.

•NOTA also make the system of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote nugatory and otiose.

• The option of NOTA for Lok Sabha and assembly elections was prescribed by the SC in 2013. The **option of NOTA in RS polls was introduced by the EC in 2014**.(**But now SC has overruled this**) Thus, **India became the 14th country to institute negative voting**.

83. Answer (b) International Labour Organisation

✓ **Highlights of the report:**

• **Real average daily wages in India almost doubled in the first two decades** after economic reforms, but low pay and wage inequality remains a serious challenge to inclusive growth.

• Overall, in 2009-10, a **third of all of wage workers were paid less than the national minimum wage,** which is merely indicative and not legally binding. That includes 41% of all casual workers and 15% of salaried workers.

• In 2011-12, the **average wage in India was about ₹247 rupees a day, almost double the 1993-94 figure of ₹128**. However, average labour productivity (as measured by GDP per worker) increased more rapidly than real average wages. Thus, India's labour share — or the proportion of national income which goes into labour compensation, as opposed to capital or landowners — has declined.

• The **rise in average wages was more rapid in rural areas**, and for **casual workers**. However, these groups started at such a low base that a yawning wage gap still remains. Thus, the average wage of casual workers — who make 62% of the earning population — was only ₹143 a day.

• **Daily wages in urban areas (₹384) also remain more than twice** as high as those in rural areas (₹175). Regional disparities in average wages have

actually increased over time, with wages rising more rapidly in high-wage States than in low-wage ones.

• **The gender wage gap decreased from 48% in 1993-94 to 34%** in 2011-12, but still remains high by international standards. And of all worker groups, the average wages of casual rural female workers was the lowest, at just ₹104 a day.

84. Answer (a) 1 only

• **Second statement is wrong because** the **Airport Authority of India will be the implementing agency of the scheme.**

✓ **Features of the scheme**

•**Target**: The **scheme envisages increasing the international ticketing to 20 crore by 2027.**
• The **scheme is to be made operational only for states,** which demonstrate their commitment to implement and provide the requisite support for promoting operations under the scheme.
• **Identification of routes**: According to the draft, state governments will identify the routes to be connected, and airline operators will assess demand on the identified routes and submit proposals for providing connectivity.
• **Permitted aircrafts**: Operations under the scheme will be permitted through fixed-wing aircraft only with more than 70 seats.
• The **scheme has proposed to set up an International Air Connectivity Fund (IACF**) — a dedicated fund for providing subsidy support under the scheme. It will be **created through the contributions of state governments.**
• The **subsidy support shall be provided to selected airlines only for the passenger seats**, which remain unsold at the time of IAC flight operation, from the total number of passenger seats for which subsidy has been requested by the selected airline as part of its proposal. The subsidy support will be extended only up to three years.

85. Answer (c) both 1 and 2

• The regulator FSSAI has come out with food safety standards for honey and its products, in a bid to curb adulteration.
✓ **The standards notified:**
• **Parameters**: As per the FSSAI notification, honey should comply with 18 parameters like that of sucrose content, glucose ratio, pollen count, foreign oligosaccharides among others.
• **Limits and standards**: The **FSSAI has fixed maximum 5% limit for sucrose content in the honey,** while 10% for carviacallosa and Honeydew honey. The moisture percentage should be maximum 20% and pollen count should be 25,000 per gram.

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•**With regard to by-products**, the FSSAI has **fixed standards for 'Bees wax' and 'royal jelly' also.**

•The regulator has **defined honey as the natural sweet substance** produced by honey bees from the nectar of blossoms or from secretions of plants, which honey bees collect, transforms and store in honey combs for ripening.

• **No additives**: If a product is sold as honey then food ingredient, including food additives should not be added to it. It should not be heated or processed to such an extent that its essential composition is changed and its quality is impaired.

•**Labelling**: Honey can be labelled according to floral or plant source, if it comes from any particular source, and has the organoleptic, physicochemical and microscopic properties corresponding with that origin.

•**Pollen content**: In the case of 'Monofloral Honey', the regulator said the minimum pollen content of the plant species concerned should not be less than 45 per cent of total pollen content. In case of 'Multi Floral Honey', the pollen content of any of the plant species should not exceed 45 per cent of the total pollen content.

✓ **what is bees wax?**

•Bees wax is obtained from the honeycombs of bees of Apidae family after the honey has been removed by draining or centrifuging. Beeswax consists of a mixture of esters of fatty acids and fatty alcohols, hydrocarbons and free fatty acids. Minor amounts of free fatty alcohols are also present. The combs are melted with hot water, steam or solar heat and the melted product is filtered and cast into cakes of yellow bees wax.

•White bees wax is obtained by bleaching the yellow bees wax with oxidising agents.

✓ **Royal jelly**

•Royal jelly is the mixture of secretions from hypopharyngeal and mandibular glands of worker bees, free from any additive. It is the food of larval and adult queens. It is a raw and natural food, unprocessed except for filtration which does not undergo addition of substances. The colour, taste and the chemical composition of royal jelly are determined by absorption and transformation by the bees fed with the following two types of foods during the royal jelly production time.

86. Answer (c) South Korea

•**Regional coalition known as the 'Quad',** the quadrilateral formation **includes Japan, India, United States and Australia**. All four nations find a common ground of being the democratic nations and common interests of unhindered maritime trade and security.
• **It was in news because** a report on the policy recommendations on Indian Ocean security by four think tanks from the Quad countries has been unveiled.

✓**Important recommendations:**
• **Maintain the momentum of high-level consultations among the Quad countries with the aim of "free and open Info-Pacific region"** and progressively move it to a political level.
• **Australia, Japan, India and the US should work with countries in the IOR to help maintain independent security and economic policies** by supporting high-quality alternatives to unilateral Chinese investments and political alignment with Chinese regional objectives.
• The **four countries should work to oppose the establishment of permanent Chinese military bases in the IOR**. This should include demonstrating to China that its security needs can be met through cooperation and consultation with other nations and without the recourse to a "disruptive unilateral military presence."
•**Naval fleets should evolve increasingly long range operations**. This may require consideration in Japan of new options such as nuclear propulsion for its submarines.

87. Answer (d) All of the above

• The **ICOMOS, a global monument conservation body**, has **launched an initiative to assess the damage to the rich cultural and built heritage in flood-devastated Kerala and set up an emergency response platform**.

• The **initiative also aims at setting up a platform for emergency response** to the cultural heritage damaged by the floods in Kerala.
• ICOMOS has also approached the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) to partner in the post-disaster work.

• The **International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) is a prestigious non-government organisation.**
• It promotes the application of theory, methodology and scientific techniques for conservation of architectural and archaeological heritage across the world.
• **ICOMOS is also an advisory body to**

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the UNESCO for cultural heritage, in particular for implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

88. Answer (a) Maharashtra

• With an aim to encourage the prominent Buddhist heritage and pilgrim sites in the state of Maharashtra, Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation in association with Ministry of Tourism recently organized the 6th International Buddhist Conclave 2018 in **Aurangabad, Maharashtra**. The Conclave will **highlight the traditional and historical facets of Buddhism across the world**.

• **Theme:** 'Buddha Path – The Living Heritage".

• **Significance**: The International Buddhist Conclave is testament of the Ministry of Tourism and Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation towards its commitment to advance the experience of travellers as well as tourists looking to experience the spirit of Buddhist inheritance of our country.

89. Answer (b) 2 only

•**First Statement is wrong because the Ministry of Women and Child Development,** Government of India had recently organized an orientation workshop for various stakeholders participating in the Poshan Maah (National Nutrition Month) being celebrated in the month of September.

• **The** Workshop focused on sensitizing the line Ministries, States/UTs and District level functionaries and partners on various aspects of Rashtriya Poshan Maah (National Nutrition Month) being celebrated during the month of September across the Country as part of Jan Andolan under POSHAN Abhiyaan.

✓ **About Poshan Maah (National Nutrition Month):**

• the **primary objective of the celebration of Poshan Maah is to take the messages of POSHAN to the grass root level.**

• The programme- and **initiative of WCD Ministry and NITI Aayog** is supported by 18 line Ministries/Departments/Government Organizations.

• It seeks to synergise all efforts by leveraging technology and intends to take nutrition awareness to the level of Jan Andolan or People's Movement.

• The **programme focuses on 8 themes –** Antenatal Care, Optimal Breastfeeding (Early & Exclusive), Complementary Feeding, Anemia, Growth Monitoring, Girls-education, diet, right age of Marriage, Hygiene & Sanitation, Food Fortification.

90. Answer (c) 2 and 3 only

• First statement is wrong because A **National Logistics Portal is being**

developed by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to ensure ease of trading in the international and domestic markets. The **portal will link all the stakeholders of EXIM, domestic trade and movement and all trade activities on a single platform.**

•**Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, in his Budget** speech last year, had **announced that the Department of Commerce will create a portal which will be a single window online market place for trade and will connect business, create opportunities and bring together various ministries, departments and the private sector.**

✓ **Four main components**

• Stakeholders like traders, manufacturers, logistics service providers, infrastructure providers, financial services, government departments and groups and associations will all be on one platform, once the portal is created. **There are four main components of the portal** which include a **logistics e-market place, a logistics certification platform, an integrated regulatory platform and banking and financial services platform.**

• The logistics e-market place will allow a trader or exporter to plan end to end shipment route, check availability, enquire the rates make bookings for a wide range of services such as freight forward, ocean freight, truck, warehouse, air freight, ICD services and packaging services, exchange e-contract, generate invoice, pay electronically, and monitor physical flow of goods.

91. Answer (d) All of the above

• Three new applications have been launched for the benefit of the litigants and lawyers.

These applications are: e-Filing, e-Pay, and National Service and Tracking of Electronic Processes (NSTEP).

✓ **e-Filing application:**

•The application is meant for online registration of lawyers and litigants. Through the application, one can file cases from any part of India to any court on registration.
Portfolio management of cases of litigants and lawyers is provided on the portal and one can get updates from time to time about filed cases, cases under objection or rejected cases.

✓ **e-Pay application:**

•It is a unified portal wherein facility to pay online court fees is provided. The platform is user friendly which can be used with very little self help. At present, the facility will be made

operational in two states – Maharashtra and Haryana.

✓**National Service and Tracking of Electronic Processes (NSTEP):**

•It is **launched as part of the eCourts Project**. It is a transparent and secure system for transmission of process from one location to another and will address delays in process. It offers facility to send electronic processes directly to registered mail of the addressee by secured mechanism; enables uploading of documents associated with process; and facilities like tracking GPS, obtaining photograph and on screen signature.

✓ **About the e- courts project:**

• The eCourts Mission Mode Project (Phase I 2010-15; Phase II 2015-19) is a national eGovernance project for ICT enablement of district and subordinate courts of the country.

•**Implementation**: It is being implemented by the Government of India with a total outlay of 1670 crores (Phase II).

•The **major objectives of the Project** are to make whole judicial system ICT enabled by putting in place adequate and modern hardware and connectivity; automation of workflow management in all courts; electronic movement of records from taluka/trial to appeal courts; installation of video conferencing (VC) facility and recording of witness through Video Conferencing.

•**Specific targets set under the Project include**: computerization of all the courts (around 20400) and DLSA and TLSC; WAN and cloud connectivity in 3500 court complexes; full Installation and use of Video Conferencing facility at 3000 Court Complexes and 1150 prisons; charting out key identified citizen services like electronic filing, daily orders, delivery of decrees, online case status in all the district courts etc.

92. Answer (a) Niti Ayog

• **NITI Aayog has launched 5 Thematic Reports on Sustainable Development in Indian Himalayan Region.** The reports from the five working groups discuss the significance, the challenges, the ongoing actions and a future roadmap.

• Recognizing the uniqueness of the Himalayas and the challenges for sustainable development, NITI Aayog had set up 5 Working Groups (WGs) in June 2017 to prepare a roadmap for actions in 5 thematic areas.

✓ **The themes include:**

1) Inventory and Revival of Springs in Himalayas for Water Security.
2) Sustainable Tourism in Indian Himalayan Region.
3) Transformative Approach to Shifting Cultivation.
4) Strengthening Skill & Entrepreneurship Landscape in Himalayas.
5) Data/Information for Informed Decision Making.

✓ **Immediate Challenges:**

• Nearly 30% of springs crucial to water security of people are drying and 50% have reported reduced discharge. Himalayan Tourism growing annually at 6.8% has created huge challenge related to solid waste, water, traffic, loss of bio-cultural diversity etc.

✓ **Important recommendations made:**

• Spring Mapping and Revival, using 8 steps protocol be taken up across Himalayan States in phased manner.
• Apply carrying capacity concept to all major tourist destinations; implement and monitor tourism sector Standards and apply performance based incentives for States faring well on the standards.
• Assessment of nature & extent of Shifting Cultivation area, improved policy coherence, strengthened tenurial security & improved access to related programs/schemes are other key recommendations to transform shifting cultivation.
• Strengthening of skill & entrepreneurship will require focus on identified priority sectors where mountains have advantage, investment in trainers, assessors and training centers in industry partnership.
• Having a Central Data Management Agency for Himalayas to provide data with high fidelity scenario while addressing data sharing, access, authenticity and comparability issues will go a long way in addressing data related issues.

✓ **It also includes**:

•**Setting up of a Himalayan Authority** for coordinated and holistic development of entire Himalayan region.
•Launching of "**Himalaya Calling**": An Awareness to Action Campaign as people's movement.
•**Setting up of Mission on Spring Water Management in Himalayas**, National Mission/Program on Transforming Shifting Cultivation in North Eastern States, demand driven network of skill and entrepreneurship development Centers in Himalayan States among others.

93. Answer (c) Earth

• NASA has launched the Ice, Cloud and Land Elevation Satellite-2 (ICESat-2) mission to measure — in unprecedented detail — changes in the heights of Earth's polar ice to understand what is causing ice sheets to melt fast.

About ICESat- 2 mission:

•ICESat-2 will measure the average annual elevation change of land ice covering Greenland and Antarctica to within the width of a pencil, capturing 60,000 measurements every second.
•ICESat-2's Advanced Topographic Laser Altimeter System (ATLAS) measures height by timing how long it takes individual light photons to travel from the spacecraft to Earth and back.

✓ **The satellite mission has four science objectives:**
•Measure melting ice sheets and investigate how this effects sea level rise.
•Measure and investigate changes in the mass of ice sheets and glaciers.
•Estimate and Study Sea ice thickness.
•Measure the height of vegetation in forests and other ecosystems worldwide.

94. Answer (a) 1 only

• **Second statement is wrong** because the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) Programme launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MoHUPA)**, in Mission mode **envisions provision of Housing for All by 2022**,(NOT 2025) when the Nation completes 75 years of its Independence.

• **It was in news because** the Centre has approved construction of nearly 1.12 lakh more affordable houses for urban poor in eight states under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna, with Andra Pradesh bagging the largest share of over 37,000 housing units.

✓ **More About scheme**

•The Mission seeks to address the housing requirement of urban poor including slum dwellers through following programme verticals:
• Slum rehabilitation of Slum Dwellers with participation of private developers using land as a resource.
• Promotion of Affordable Housing for weaker section through credit linked subsidy.
• Affordable Housing in Partnership with Public & Private sectors.
• Subsidy for beneficiary-led individual house construction /enhancement.

✓ **Key facts:**
• The beneficiaries are poor and people

living under EWS and LIG categories in the country.

• The scheme is divided into three phases. In the first phase, a total of 100 cities will be covered from April 2015 to March 2017. In phase two, 200 cities will be covered from April 2017 to March 2019. In the third phase, the leftover cities will be covered from April 2019 to March 2022.

• The government is providing an interest subsidy of 6.5% on housing loans which can be availed by beneficiaries for 15 years from start of loan date.

• The government will grant Rs 1 lakh to all the beneficiaries of the scheme. In addition, Rs 1.5 lakh will be given to all eligible urban poor who want to construct their houses in urban areas or plan to go for renovation in their existing houses. One can also avail loans under this scheme to build toilets in existing houses.

95. Answer (d) All of the above

• The **Bombay Natural History Society** (BNHS), one of India's premier avian research institutes, has **started operating its first regional centre on the campus of Wetland Research and Training Centre near Chilika Lake**. (**Chilika lake is in Odisha**)

• With opening up its branch in Odisha, the BNHS would be engaged in identifying the air route of the foreign birds flocking the Chilika lake during winter, sample collection, training related to bird census, publishing bird migration atlas books, examining various diseases among the birds and to review the condition of the Nalabana bird sanctuary along with counting the birds.

✓ **About Chilika Lagoon:**

• It is the **largest coastal lagoon in India** and the **second largest lagoon in the world** after The New Caledonian barrier reef in New Caledonia.

• It is the **largest wintering ground for migratory waterfowl** found anywhere on the Indian sub-continent.

• It is **one of the hotspot of biodiversity in the country**, and some rare, vulnerable and endangered species listed in the IUCN Red List of threatened Animals inhabit in the lagoon for atleast part of their life cycle.

• On account of its rich bio-diversity and ecological significance, **Chilika was designated as the 1st "Ramsar Site" of India.**

• The **Nalaban Island within the lagoon is notified as a Bird Sanctuary** under Wildlife (Protection) Act, the National Wetlands, mangroves and coral reefs Committee of Ministry of Environment

& Forests, Government of India, have also identified the lagoon as a priority site for conservation and management.
• Chilika Lagoon lies in the districts of Puri, Khurda and Ganjam of Odisha State along the eastern coast of India. It is well connected to the Chennai and Kolkata through National Highway No 5, and the Chennai Kolkata rail line passes along the western bank of the Lagoon Balugaon, with Balugaon, Chilika and Rambha being the main stations along the Western shoreline of the lagoon.

✓ **About BNHS:**

• The **Bombay Natural History Society, founded on 15 September 1883, is one of the largest non-governmental organisations** in India engaged in conservation and biodiversity research.

• **BNHS is the partner of BirdLife International in India.** It has been **designated as a 'Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation' by the Department of Science and Technology.**

• Logo: The BNHS logo is the great hornbill.

• **Internet of Birds**: IT consultancy firm Accenture and the Bombay Natural History Society have developed Internet of Birds platform that identifies bird species found in India using Artificial Intelligence technology, including machine learning and computer vision, from digital photos that are uploaded by the public.

96. Answer (c) Argentina

• In the **framework of the Argentinian presidency of G20**, the **2018 edition of Digital Economy ministerial meeting is being held in Salta, Argentina**. The **ministerial meeting was preceded by the second meeting of the G20 Digital Economy Task Force.**

• **Argentina has selected the theme, 'Building consensus for fair and sustainable development,' for the 2018 G20 Leaders' Summi**t, and has identified three key issues for the agenda: the future of work, infrastructure for development, and a sustainable food future.

✓ **Digital Economy Task Force:**

• The Digital Economy Task Force (DETF) was established under the 2017 German presidency, based on the decision adopted in Hangzhou in 2016 under the Chinese Presidency.

✓**About G20:**

• The **G20 is made up of 19 countries**

and the European Union. The 19 countries are **Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, France, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States.**

• The G20 was born out of a meeting of G7 finance ministers and central bank governors in 1999 who saw a need for a more inclusive body with broader representation to have a stronger impact on addressing the world's financial challenges. The G7 invited leading markets – both developed and emerging – to form a new ministerial-level forum: the G20.

97. Answer (b) 2 only

•**First statement is wrong because** Countries like Canada, Australia and US already have Biofuele powered plane**. So India is not the first country in the world to have such plane.**

• But India is the first developing nation to experiment this.

https://www.google.com/amp/s/m.economictimes.com/industry/transportation/airlines-/-aviation/india-to-join-elite-club-on-monday-with-first-biofuel-flight-between-dehradun-and-delhi/amp_articleshow/65530257.cms

•India has now joined the small league of nations with the US and Australia to have flown a biofuel-powered aircraft.

• SpiceJet flew the Bombardier Q400 (VT-SUI) on biofuel from Dehradun to Delhi.

•The fuel was prepared by the CSIR-Indian Institute of Petroleum (IIP) Dehradun**.**

•**Significance:** Biofuel flights could make air travel cleaner and more efficient, thus drastically reducing the cost of airline operations by reducing the dependency on aviation turbine fuel. The biofuel is made partially from renewable resources such as agricultural residues, non-edible oils and bio-degradable fractions of industrial and municipal wastes.

98. Answer (c) Both 1 and 2 are Correct.

• **It was in news because** the Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned two new projects under Heritage and North East Circuits of Swadesh Dashan Scheme for Rs. 164.95 Crores in Punjab and Tripura.

✓ **Heritage Circuit:**

•Under Heritage Circuit in the state of Punjab, the project covers sites of Anandpur Sahib – Fatehgarh Sahib – Chamkaur Sahib – Ferozpur – Amritsar – Khatkar Kalan – Kalanour – Patiala at the

cost of Rs. 99.95 crores.

•The project includes development of Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar for Rs. 8 Crores, development of Tourist Infrastructure and Heritage Path at Anandpur Sahib for Rs. 28.99 crores, development of Tourist Infrastructure at Fatehgarh Sahib among others.

•The facilities being developed include Virtual Reality Shows (Jallianwala and Hussainiwala Border), beautification and landscaping, interpretation centres, façade development, wayside amenities, parking, CCTV and Wi-Fi facilities, Cafeterias, Open Air Theatre, drinking water facility etc.

✓**North East Circuit:**

•Under North East Circuit in Tripura, the sites of Surma Cherra- Unakoti- Jampui Hills- Gunabati-Bhunaneshwari-Matabari- Neermahal- Boxanagar-Chotta khola- Pilak- Avangchaarra are covered with total project cost of Rs. 65 Crores.

•The project envisaged infrastructural development of the sites with special emphasis on developing an Interpretation Centre, Tourist Visitor Centres, Cafeteria, Last Mile Connectivity, Illumination of sites and monuments, Wayside Amenities, Floating Jetties, Camping Grounds, Parking Facilities, Adventure Activities, Ghat Development at above sites.

✓ **About Swadesh Darshan Scheme:**

•The **Tourism Ministry had launched 'Swadesh Darshan' scheme with an objective to develop theme-based tourist circuits in the country.** These tourist circuits will be developed on the principles of high tourist value, competitiveness and sustainability in an integrated manner.

✓ **Features of Swadesh Darshan Scheme:**

•The **scheme is 100% centrally funded for the project components undertaken for public funding.**

•To leverage the voluntary funding available for **Corporate Social Responsibility** (CSR) initiatives of Central Public Sector Undertakings and corporate sector.

•**Funding of individual project will vary from state to state** and will be finalised on the basis of detailed project reports prepared by PMC (Programme Management Consultant).

•A **National Steering Committee** (NSC) will be constituted with Minister in charge of M/O Tourism as Chairman, to steer the mission objectives and vision of the scheme.

• A **Mission Directorate headed by the Member Secretary, NSC as a nodal officer** will help in identification of projects in consultation with the States/

UTs governments and other stake holders.

• **PMC will be a national level consultant** to be appointed by the Mission Directorate.

99. Answer (d) Cuba

• The **United States and Mexico have agreed to overhaul the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), putting pressure on Canada to agree to new terms on auto trade and dispute settlement rules to remain part of the three-nation pact.** If talks with Canada are not wrapped up by the end of this week, Trump plans to notify Congress that he has reached a deal with Mexico, but would be open to Canada joining.

✓**Highlights of the new deal:**

•The deal would require 75% of auto content to be made in the NAFTA region, up from the current level of 62.5%. A fact sheet describing the bilateral agreement specified the content would be made in the United States and Mexico.

•The deal improves labour provisions, in part by requiring 40% to 45% of auto content to be made by workers earning at least $16 per hour. That measure could move some production back to the United States from Mexico and should lift Mexican wages.

•The United States relented on its demand for an automatic expiration for the deal, known as a "sunset clause." Instead, the United States and Mexico agreed to a 16-year lifespan for the deal, with a review every six years that can extend the pact for 16 years.

•Mexico agreed to eliminate dispute settlement panels for certain anti-dumping cases, a move that could complicate talks with Canada, which had insisted on the panels.

✓**What is NAFTA?**

•**NAFTA is the initialism for the North American Free Trade Agreement, an agreement signed by Canada, Mexico, and the United States** that reduced or eliminated trade barriers in North America. (Since the U.S. and Canada already had a free trade agreement (signed in 1988), NAFTA merely brought Mexico into the trade bloc.)

100. Answer (b) 2 only is correct

• **First statement is wrong because** The European Space Agency (ESA) has launched Aeolus satellite**(NOT NASA)** that will **measure winds around the globe and help improve weather forecasting.** The **Earth Explorer Aeolus satellite was launched into polar orbit on a Vega rocket from Europe's Spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana.**

• **Aeolus is the first satellite mission to acquire profiles of Earth's wind on a global scale.**

• These near-realtime observations will improve the accuracy of numerical weather and climate prediction and advance our understanding of tropical dynamics and processes relevant to climate variability.
• Aeolus is the fifth in the family of ESA's Earth Explorer missions, which address key scientific challenges identified by the science community and demonstrate breakthrough technology in observing techniques.

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